NEW AGE OF ISLAM

(Acceptable Interpretation)

FALAH SHAMS

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful.

New Age of Islam
(Acceptable Interpretation)

BY

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Salutations:
Muslims follow the name of God's prophets with the prayer *alaehis salaam(as)* or 'may peace be upon him,' and for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu alaehi wasallam(sa)* or 'may peace and blessings of God be upon him.' Companions of prophets and righteous personalities who have passed away are saluted by *radhi-Allaho anhu/a (ra)* or 'may Allah be pleased with him/her." While such salutations sometimes are not set out in the text for readability or shown with abbreviations, we encourage readers to offer these prayers as if set out in full.

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Dedicated to:

My wife, Zahida, who inspired me to compile this for my children. They have the burden of carrying the torch of my faith to my grandchildren. I pray that this will help them in some way to do their job well.

Introduction

The basic source of knowledge about Islam is the Holy Qur'an followed by the Sunnah (practices of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] passed down through his companions) and the collection of Ahadith (quotations of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] gathered in a formal written form about 150 to 300 years after him).

Interpretations of all these sources are authored by many companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] as well as many scholars and saints over the last 1400 years of Islamic history. Various schools of thought evolved in Islam based on different interpretations although the basic components of beliefs were not changed. There was a need to consolidate these interpretations as an important step towards unification of the *Ummah* (Community) of Holy Prophet[sa] as one community.

Based on the prophecies of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], a person was to appear in the beginning of the 14th century of *Hijri* Calendar (Islamic Lunar calendar) as the Messiah and Mahdi, guided by Allah. He would be the second manifestation of Jesus[as]. He was also referred to in *Ahadith* as the *Hakam* (Judge). It would be his task to decide among various interpretations so the *Ummah* could have an acceptable interpretation of the teaching of Holy Qur'an as well as *Ahadith*. Appearance of the Messiah would be at the beginning of the last 1000 years of the human race. Fresh interpretations were needed for this New Age of Islam.

In the beginning of the 14th Century *Hijri*, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] of Qadian, India appeared and claimed that he was the manifestation of the prophecies of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]

about the Messiah, the Mahdi as well as the *Hakam*. He wrote more than 80 books and created a treasure of spiritual knowledge providing interpretations that were based on knowledge granted to him by Allah Himself. This is the key factor in considering his interpretations authentic as compared to any other. Interpretations based on the Divine communication are the only ones that can supersede all others and be acceptable for all.

In his time, three issues were raised against him: His belief of Jesus[as] not descending from the skies, his practice of Jihad of the pen rather than Jihad of the sword and finality of prophethood with the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The first two of his beliefs have been widely accepted throughout the Muslim world. Most Muslims do not believe Jesus to be alive or descending from the skies and after 9/11 incidences, definition of Jihad is coinciding with what the Promised Messiah[as] explained over 100 years ago. It is a matter of time that Muslim *Ummah* will comprehend and accept his interpretation of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] being the *Khatam-an-Nabiyyeen* (Seal of the Prophets).

Interpretations provided by the Promised Messiah[as] are logical, rooted in deep knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and appeal to any seeker of truth. These are also the only interpretations that will be acceptable to the outsiders, whether Muslims or Christians, because they have the blessings of Divine support and are practical for consolidation of the whole human race under one umbrella of worship of one God.

Overview of the Book

Defining the Deity:
1: Attributes of Allah
2: Divinity of Jesus[as] - Islamic View

1: The very first interpretation to be studied is defining the Deity Who is to be worshipped. Very first article is mostly taken from the writings of the Promised Messiah[as], which describes the attributes of Allah and how they compare to other faiths.

This begs the question: what about the divinity of Jesus[as] in which Christians believe.

2: In this regard is a lecture delivered by author's father Maulana Jalal-ud Din Shams when he was the Imam of the Fazal Mosque in London, England. He describes how the attributes of God are similar in the Bible and in the Holy Qur'an and neither one applies to Jesus[as] who was a prophet of God.

Word of God-The Holy Qur'an:
3: Holy Qur'an-An unparalleled Divine sign
4: Abrogation of the Holy Qur'an's verses

3: Describes how it can be established that the Holy Qur'an is the perfect book revealed in a perfect language.

4: Addresses the issue of abrogation of some of the verses of the Holy Qur'an as claimed by some scholars. Promised Messiah[as] has addressed this issue and has made it a non-issue. It is essential to understand especially in view of the fact that various Muslim leaders use this vehicle to endorse their own political agendas even in this day and age.

Prophet Muhammad[sa] :
5: Muhammad[sa] in the Bible
6: Prophet Muhammad[sa] as a Worshipper
7: Prophet Muhammad[sa] and Human Rights
Prophet Muhammad[sa] appeared in accordance with the prophecies in the Old Testament as well as prophecies made by Jesus[as] in the New Testament. It is important to know how his personage is tied to the Christian and Jewish faith through Prophet Abraham[as].

5: It is a lecture delivered by author's father Maulana Jalal-ud Din Shams in London, England when he was the missionary there. He has very logically laid out the prophecies in the Bible fulfilled by the appearance of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and how they do not apply to Jesus[as] or anyone else.

6: It describes the worship of one God as practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. He emphasized all through his life that he should not be worshipped as a deity but it is only One God who is worthy of worship. He was the perfect worshipper of One God. This article also explains how in an exceptional way he established the worship of Allah by which worship of God takes place around the globe at every minute of the day every day of the year.

7: It addresses Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and his record about human rights. He was a servant of humanity even before he claimed to be a messenger of God. This article also explains how the human rights established by United Nations were already established by Prophet Muhammad[sa] 1400 years earlier.

Jesus son of Mary:
8: Crucifixion of Jesus[as].
9: Jesus[as] in the Holy Qur'an

Christians base their salvation on the crucifixion of Jesus[as] son of

Mary[as]. They claim that he died on the cross for their sins. Promised Messiah[as] established through the Bible that the death of Jesus[as] did not take place on the cross and it was not the mission or purpose of Jesus[as].

8: Discussion on the historical background of the crucifixion as well as the accounts in New Testament which are in contradiction to Jesus[as] dying on the cross.

9: It describes the status of Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] as described in the Holy Qur'an and thus understood by all Muslims. The Holy Qur'an not only describes the status of Jesus[as] as a wonderful prophet of Allah but also refutes some of the negative impressions about him found in the New Testament.

Second Coming of Messiah:

10: Second Coming of Messiah
11: Introduction of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
12: Character of the Promised Messiah[as]

So far it is established that Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] was a prophet, died a natural death and will not be coming in his physical body. The discussion has to take place as to the fulfillment of his prophecies about coming the second time in the Latter Days.

10: Discussion on how the prophecies of Second Coming of Jesus[as] in the New Testament were fulfilled by the appearance of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as].

11: An introduction of the Community established by the Promised Messiah[as], its name which is rooted in the name of Prophet Muhammad[sa] given to him in the Holy Qur'an as "Ahmad". It also illustrates how this community practices its claim of "Love for all, hatred for none".

12: Relating of some of the accounts in the life of the Promised Messiah[as] giving glimpses of excellence of his character.

Khilafat of Ahmadiyyat:
13: Paradise on earth through Khilafat
14: Divine Support of Khilafat

After the demise of the Promised Messiah[as] in accordance with his description of the Second Manifestation, system of Khilafat was established in 1908 to continue his mission.

13: Concept of Khilafat as established by Allah and historical background of this system. It also describes how the system works under the divine guidance.

14: Discussion about the prophecy of the Promised Messiah[as] fulfilled through the appointment of the current Khalifa Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad. It describes his efforts for establishment of peace throughout the world and how he is being blessed by Divine help.

Path to Allah:
15: Blessing of financial sacrifice
16: Domestic Harmony
17: *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem* - The Straight Path

In the definition of righteous people as described by the Holy Qur'an, financial sacrifice and taking care of the relatives is consistently mentioned. Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], throughout his life, exemplified financial sacrifice in the cause of God and his excellent treatment of his wives. Every Muslim needs to have an understanding of these qualities in view of the cultural struggle in the Latter Days.

15: It lays out details of the requirement of making financial

sacrifices without which no organization can operate. How the blessings of God shower upon the ones making these sacrifices and their spiritual status gets elevated.

16: Discussion on the responsibilities of husband and wife in view of the interpretation of passages from Holy Qur'an and practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] as well as the Promised Messiah[as]. These values are essential for establishment of a peaceful and healthy society.

17: Muslims are required to pray so many times in a day asking God to guide us to the *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem* or the Straight Path that is a prayer in the *Surah Fatiha,* the first chapter of the Holy Qur'an. Means of achieving this path are not easy in the modern societies. This article discusses how to tread on that path so one can achieve the spiritual status, which is only rewarded by God, by His mercy.

Imam of the Age:
18: Accepting the Imam of the Age

18: The last article in this book explains why it is essential for everyone to accept the Imam of the Age laying out the historical background of Imams of different ages starting from Prophet Adam[as]. How Allah's system of messengers has been established throughout the ages for the guidance and progress of man. It is essential to accept the interpretations of the Imam of the Age to save humankind from the destruction, which becomes inevitable by following man-made dogmas and philosophies. Salvation of humanity is tied to the acceptance of the Imam of the Age and of his interpretations for the New Age of Islam, the last 1000 years of the current human life cycle.

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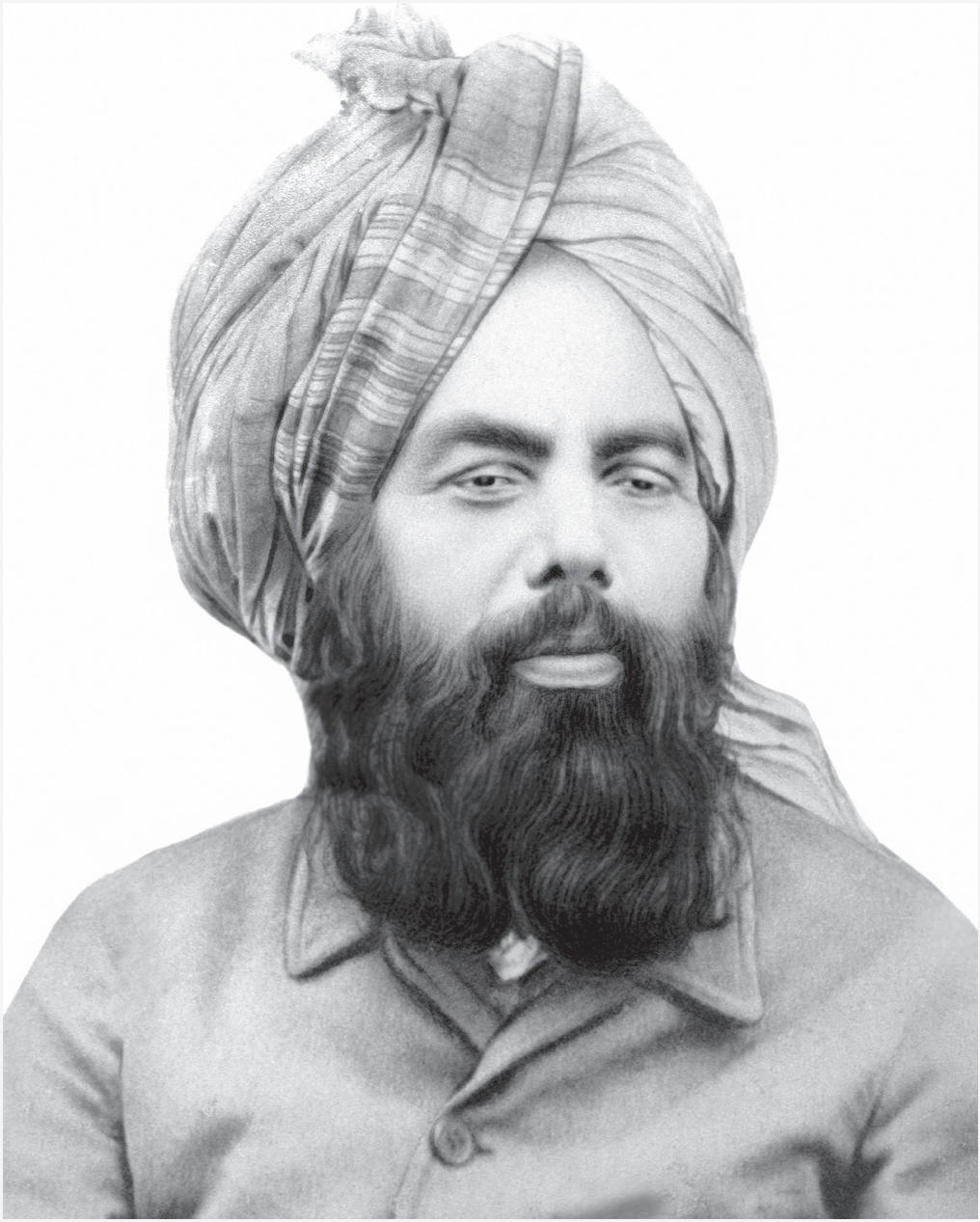

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani
The Promised Messiah Alaihissalam

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as], Mahdi and Promised Messiah says:

"Someone asked Khwaja Ghulam Fareed of Chacharan why the prophecies do not appear in the physical form. He gave a wonderful answer by stating: Did the prophecies about the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] appear as the Jews thought they would? Jews used say that the prophet would appear among the progeny of Isaac[as]. Then, did he appear among them? Similarly, people had thought that Elijah[as] would come before Jesus[as]. Did Elijah[as] come down from the skies? Absolutely not! So it is not necessary that all prophecies about the Promised Messiah be fulfilled as some people desire. These kinds of errors take root in every nation. At the end Allah's appointee comes and corrects these beliefs and thoughts. In fact, when Allah makes it evident through continuous heavenly signs that someone is from Allah, then in every questionable issue his interpretation becomes the final decision. His interpretation of all the prophecies should be accepted."

(Ruhani Khazain II, Malfoozat Vol. 9, page 270-271, April 16, 1907)

Defining the Deity:

1: Attributes of Allah

2: Divinity of Jesus[as]

1: Attributes of Allah

The Holy Qur'an states:
"Allah is He, except Him, none is worthy of worship, the Ever-living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he who can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows all that is before them and all that is behind them, and they cannot compass aught His knowledge, except that which He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth; and the care of them wearies Him not. He is the Most High, the Most Great."[1]

Here God has been described as a Being Who has no associate with Him in respect to the qualities mentioned. He alone is alive and all other receive life from him. He exists in His own being and everything else exists through His support.

The attributes of God mentioned above already existed in the Old Testament as well. For example Isaiah[as] says, "The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary."[2] Jeremiah[as] the prophet says, "The Lord is a living God and an Everlasting King,"[3] In Psalms we read, "He knoweth the secrets of the heart."[4]

While most of the attributes of God were described in the Bible as just shown, the details of the attributes were not given as in the Holy Qur'an.

Four attributes:

Islam has presented four attributes of God that may be considered the master attributes because all others fall under these four. The four attributes are:
Rabubiyyat
Rahmaniyyat

Rahimiyyat
Malikiyyat of the Day of Judgment

Surah Fatiha describes Allah to set forth these master attributes by calling Him:

Rabbul-Aalameen: Sustainer of all the worlds
Rahmaan: The Most Gracious
Raheem: The Most Merciful
Malik-e-yomiddin: Master of the day of judgement

The divine grace is manifested in the world in four types. The first is the most general type of grace. The *Rabubiyyat* is the absolute grace which perpetually envelopes everything from the heavens to the earth without distinction of animate or inanimate. Creation of everything from non-existence and its development is through this grace. This grace is the very life of the universe. Without this grace, the universe will end and that is why this attribute of God being *Rabbul Aalameen* or Sustainer of all the worlds is mentioned first in the list of the attributes. This is the natural order because this attribute of grace is most general in scope and it comes before the other attributes and it comprehends everything whether animate or unanimate.

The second type of grace *Rahmaniyyat* is also of a general scope but the difference between this and the first attribute is that it is bestowed only upon animates. The special attention of the Divine towards living things is called the *Rahmaniyyat*. It operates according to the needs of all living things completely gratuitously. It is not the result of or reward for any action. Through this grace, all the means of life which are needed by every living being or its species for own continuance, are made available. It is the consequence of this

grace that not only the physical needs are satisfied but also to provide the nourishment for the spiritual development, word of God descends on the living beings. It is *Rahmaniyyat* that has provided the surface of the earth for residence, the sun and the moon for light, air for breathing, water for drinking, all varieties of food for eating, millions of medicines for treatment and the Divine books for spiritual guidance. There is no basis to say that these blessings are a result of anyone's actions or efforts or a result of anyone's asking, therefore it must be understood that this is a gratuitous bounty and a manifestation of divine compassion so that all animate should achieve its natural purpose and all its needs may be fulfilled.

The third type of grace is not general but a special grace. Under the general grace, a beneficiary need not be good, nor is required to put forward any effort to take advantage of it. However, in the case of the special grace called *Rahimiyyat,* striving and effort and purification of the heart and supplication and attention towards God and every other kind of appropriate effort is needed. The existence of this grace is proved by observation of the law of nature. Without doubt, a special mercy descends upon people who strive truly in the cause of God and withdraw from darkness and disorder. By virtue of this grace, God's name is mentioned as *Rahim*. Because the attribute of *Rahimiyyat* is special and follows upon fulfillment of certain conditions and it is mentioned after *Rahmaniyyat* in *Surah Fatiha*.

The fourth attribute *Malik-e-youmiddin* indicates that on the Day of Judgment, comfort or suffering and pleasure or pain, whatever is experienced by man, will proceed directly from God. He will be the master of all conditions. On that day God's *Rahimiyyat* will manifest itself without the intervention of material means and it will be observed and felt that everything

besides the great power and might of Allah is non-existent. Then all comfort and joy and all reward and punishment will appear clearly as coming from God and there will be no veil in between and there will be no room left for any doubt. Those who had believed in Him, had adhered to unity, and had dyed their hearts in his pure love will experience the light of His mercy clearly and openly, and those who had not achieved faith and the love of God will be deprived of this delight and comfort and will be involved in painful torment.

Under all these four attributes fall all other attributes of God mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. The attributes that the Holy Qur'an has set out for us are in the following verses:

Allah is He, besides Him there is no God. Knower of the unseen and the seen, He is the Most Gracious, the Ever Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgment, the Sovereign, the Most Holy, the Source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, and the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is Mighty the Wise .[5]

He has power to do all that He wills. He is the Lord of the world, Most Gracious, Ever merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement.[6]

I respond to the call of the caller when he calls on Me.[7]

The Ever-living, He is Allah, the Single, Allah the Self-Existing and Besought of all. He begets not nor is He begotten and there is none like unto Him.[8]

COMPARISON WITH OTHER RELIGIONS:

Now let us examine how the concept and the attributes of God presented by Islam compare with that of the other religions.

The older religions such as Hinduism even deny the basic attributes presented by Islam. For example, generally they do not believe in the real creation by God from non-existence but according to their belief the particles were there and God only assembled them and that is as far as the concept of creation goes. They do not believe that God could forgive anyone's sins but is like a judge who must punish if the sin is committed. Islam, however, presents God as the creator of everything from non-existence and the Master of the Day of Judgment, not a mere judge. Therefore, to forgive His creation or to reward extraordinarily for limited actions is within His power. Whatever God bestows upon a creature as a reward for his actions is purely His bounty.

Looking at the Gospels, we find that it teaches to pray in the following words:

"Our Father Who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and put us not in temptation, but save us from evil for Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever."

However, the Holy Qur'an says that the earth is not empty of God's Holiness which is proclaimed not only in Heaven but also on earth. It says: "There is not a thing, but glorifies Him with His praise".[9] The mountains glorify Him, the rivers glorify Him, the trees glorify Him and many righteous ones are occupied

with His remembrance. Everything is obedient to Him. Not a leaf can fall without His command. Every particle of the earth and mountains, every drop of the rivers and oceans, every leaf of trees and plants and all particles of men and beasts recognize God and obey Him and are occupied with His glorification and praise Him because they are all subject to His rules of creation. How can it be said that God's kingdom is not on earth when some of the things obey the commandment of the law and some are obedient to divine decrees and some are occupied with obedience of both. But the Gospel says that the earth is empty of the glorification of God and the reason is indicated in the sentence that follows, namely, that the kingdom of God has not yet arrived on earth. That is why God's will has not been put into effect on the earth as it operates in Heaven. The teaching of the Qur'an is altogether contrary to this.

Aside from the above example, Christians of today present God as part of trinity, of which Jesus[as] and the Holy Spirit are parts as well. It goes against the concept of oneness presented by Islam, and God being unique to say that Jesus[as] also had the same attributes. The concept of accepting Jesus[as] as having divine attributes is in clear contradiction of the Bible as well. It is written that the Lord fainteth not, neither is weary but we find that Jesus[as] used to get tired and sleep; as once he fell asleep in the ship according to Matthew.[10] It is written that the Lord is a Living God and an Everlasting King and we find that Jesus[as] was not only lacking kingdom but stated, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head."[11] He did not even possess a small portion of the earth. It is written that God knoweth the secrets of the heart and we find that Jesus[as] was not even close to being the All-Knowing because he said, "But of that day and of that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the Father."[12]

Furthermore, how could he be even considered to be Self-Subsistent when he required food like anyone else and declared, "As the living Father has sent me and I live by the Father."[13] That is what Islam has presented that everything in the universe lives by God alone.

NAME "ALLAH":

In comparing the concept of God as presented by Islam with that of Christianity, you must have heard many times the remarks in reference to the name of God: Allah. First, let us understand that the word Allah is not an invention of Islam. The word in Arabic language was given to the Creator and God of the worlds. In English language, if someone asks another person if he believes in God, he may answer yes I believe in God. Since we cannot differentiate in speech the difference of capital G or small g, it does not give us a clear understanding of which god he is speaking of. However, if the answer is that one believes in Allah, the answer becomes clear because Allah denotes certain attributes and qualities that only pertain to the Creator God and no confusion is left open.

There is only one group of Christians who makes a big issue of the name given to God that is the Jehovah Witnesses. They come knocking on your doors and ask you if you know the name of God and regardless of your answer let you in the information that God's name is Jehova. The name Jehovah is not unfamiliar to the Christians. It occurs frequently in the Old Testament but its origin is uncertain. The name Jehovah is supposedly a development of a Hebrew name, formed from the four Hebrew letters equivalent to YHWH. A vast philosophy has grown up around Yahweh as the name of God but until the movement known as Jehovah's Witnesses began changing its English scriptures to include Jehovah in every

possible place, not much of an issue was made of the divine name by Christians.

First of all, Jehovah, the name used today, cannot possibly be Hebrew. The letters j and v do not occur in that language. The argument that Jehovah is the true and original name of God then cannot be valid if the Hebrew origin of the Scriptures is kept in view.

Biblical scholars have stated that the Old Testament is composed essentially of four major narratives that have been combined to give a single account of the creation and the early history of the people of Judah and Israel. These narratives each introduce God in a different manner and by a different name. The first group of documents supposedly originated in the southern kingdom of Judah among the people who came to be known as the Jews. These are the Yahweh or Jehovah documents called J documents by the scholars. The J documents are believed to have been produced around the 9th century B.C. During the 8th century B.C., about one hundred years later, another set of writings were produced in the northern kingdom of Israel. In these Israelite writings, God is referred to as Elohim. These are called the E documents. Still later around 5th century, Jewish Rabbis combined materials from J and E documents and produced a set of books called the JE documents. In these writings, the Israelites and Judaic names were combined to form the name Jehovah Elohim that in today's Bible is translated into English as the Lord God.

The word Elohim is the plural form of the word Eloh. It is very possible that the singular word Eloh originated from the word Allah and later on was changed to plural form for Elohim. Just the idea of similarity between the name Allah and Elohim was so offending to the Gospel followers that in

today's Bible, we no longer find Elohim. In his place has been substituted "The Lord" or the "Lord of Israel". The closest of the Hebrew names to the names of one true God, without question is Elohim, although it is still corrupt because of the addition of the plural form. There is enough evidence and the characteristic of the word Allah makes it clear that it is the original name given to God and considering that Arabic is the mother of all languages, it becomes easier to comprehend why Islam refers to God as Allah.

NEED OF PROPHET TO UNDERSTAND GOD:

In reviewing different concepts of God in various religions and descriptions of philosophers, how do we go about understanding God Almighty? It should be understood that ever since the creation of the world, the recognition of God is tied to the recognition of a prophet. It is impossible that the knowledge of Divinity could be obtained except through a prophet. A prophet is a mirror for beholding God. It is only through this mirror that the countenance of God may be seen. When God Almighty desires to manifest Himself to the world, He sends a prophet into the world who reflects His powers and to whom He displays His *Rabubiyyat*. The prophet then realizes first hand who the *Rabb* is and then the world realizes His existence. It is not possible to achieve faith in the pure unity of God in the absence of heavenly signs and wonders which are displayed by the prophets whereby they lead people to full understanding.

The meaning of what has just been stated can be clearly understood by reviewing the example of the Holy Prophet[sa] of Islam. Many people may believe God to be having all knowledge but the way the Holy Prophet[sa] could understand this attribute, no one else could. In his time, people had to put forth tremendous amount of effort to learn the Bible and

Hebrew language and find the old books to get the knowledge of Jewish religion. But the Holy Prophet[sa] would go to sleep without having any formal education or lessons on the Bible and God would teach him so much knowledge, while he was asleep, about Moses[as], Jacob[as], Joseph[as] and Jesus[as] that fourteen hundred years later, we find that the knowledge given to the Holy Prophet[sa] is accurate and the scholars of that day were wrong and had defective research. This is how the Holy Prophet[sa] knew God to be the knower, the *Aleem*, by first hand experience.

Another example will clarify it further. Many people believe that God is the Sustainer and provides food. Most of us, however, see our parents providing us food and we may, as a formality, believe that God is providing us the food but we are at a real loss to strongly understand this connection. In the life of the Holy Prophet[sa], it was neither his father nor his mother who provided him food but it was provided by Allah Himself. When he was a child, the time came according to the tradition of Arabia that he be sent with a child care taker to the village areas where the language is better spoken along with the healthy atmosphere was better for children. Because he was an orphan, no one wanted to take him considering that the rewards will not be significant. On the other hand, Halima, the caretaker, could not get a child because she was wearing worn out clothes and whoever saw her considered that she is so poor how she could afford to take care of the child. Finally, someone told this disappointed woman that she should go and get Muhammad[as] who is still available. At that point, she only accepted him to save her face in her village. However, as soon as Muhammad[sa] came to her house, abundance of food took place. The goats that were not producing milk were all of a sudden producing plenty of milk. She admitted at that point that food was given to her because of this child. Now, knowing all of this the knowledge of God being the

Rabb or Sustainer and Provider of food was so clear to the Holy Prophet[sa] that no one else could comprehend it any better.

The same examples can be related about various other attributes of God, which the Holy Prophet[sa] acknowledged by his experience and then explained to his companions.

POWER OF SPEAKING:

This brings me to an attribute of God that all religions are refusing to accept but it has been clarified to us by the Prophet of this age--the Promised Messiah[as]. That is the power of speech. Whether it is the Hindus, the Jews, the Christians, or the Muslims, everyone seemed to think that God, while He is exercising all other powers, has ceased for whatever reason to speak to us. It was through the first hand experience that the Promised Messiah[as] announced speaking of God to him. He states:

"The same Mighty and Holy God Who has descended upon me appeared to all Prophets. He appeared to Moses[as] at Sinai, to Jesus[as] at Mount Seir, and He shined forth on the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) at Mount Paran. He has communicated with me and said to me: "I am the Highest Being for the worship of Whom all Prophets were sent. I alone am the Creator and Possessor and there is none like Me. I am not subject to birth or death."[14]

It was a result of this direct speech that the faith in God was firmed up by the Promised Messiah[as] and then he could not stop himself from declaring to the people to accept and acknowledge the existence of God. He declared:

"Our highest delight is in our God for we have seen Him and found every beauty in Him. This wealth is worth procuring

though one might have to lay down one's life to procure it. This ruby is worth purchasing though one may have to lose oneself to acquire it. **O ye, who are deprived! Hasten to this fountain as it will satiate you**. It is this fountain of life that will save you. What am I to do? How shall I impress the hearts with this good news? What sort of a **drum** am I to beat in the streets in order to make the **announcement** that this is your God, so that people might hear? What remedy shall I apply to the ears of the people so that they should listen?"[15]

As God's tradition has been in the past, he started to show signs to His prophet in this age as well. As He spoke to the Promised Messiah[as], things started happening in Qadian, a remote town, an obscure and hidden place became the talk of the country. The sick were being healed and the dead were given life and the existence of God started to become clear to the people around this prophet. As his master had gotten knowledge directly from Allah, he was also taught Arabic language by God Himself and challenged the rest of the world on his knowledge of Arabic. Here was a non-Arabian challenging the world without going through formal universities providing the clear proof that same God known as *Aleem,* the knower has shown his face again. Once again it was proved through a prophet that God is alive and He speaks. Unlike a philosopher's reasoning which may get him as far as saying that God should or could exist, the prophet showed by miracles and signs and knowledge of things that God not only should or could but does in fact exist, and His proof is that He speaks today as He spoke in the past. If you keep on calling someone and he does not speak back, after a while, you may lose faith is his hearing capability as well.

This is the Islam's concept in brief. God is a living power,

speaking to His chosen ones, and keep on announcing that He exists. All other religions have given up on Him because if you keep on calling someone and get no response you will doubt the existence of that being. Promised Messiah[as]'s following announcement makes it clear about God's speech with him. He says:

"..Unless God Almighty affirms His existence through His Word, as He has manifested it through His work, the observation of the work alone does not afford complete satisfaction. For instance, if we are confronted by a room the door of which is bolted from inside, our immediate reaction would be that there is someone inside the room who has bolted the door from inside, inasmuch as it is apparently impossible to bolt a door from inside by some device employed for the purpose from the outside. But if, despite persistent calls from the outside over a period of years, no response becomes audible from inside, our supposition that there must be someone inside would have to be abandoned and we would be compelled to conclude that the door has been bolted from inside through some clever device. This is the situation in which those philosophers have placed themselves whose understanding is limited solely to the observation of the work of God. It is a great mistake to imagine that God is like a corpse interred in the earth whose recovery is the business of man. If God has only been discovered through human effort, it is vain to expect anything from Him. Indeed, God has, through eternity, called mankind to Himself by affirming: *I am present*. It would be a great impertinence to imagine that man has laid God under an obligation by discovering Him through his own effort, and that if there had been no philosophers He would have continued unknown.

It is equally stupid to enquire how God can speak unless He has a tongue to speak with. The answer is: Has He not created the earth and the heavenly bodies without physical hands? Does He not view

the universe without eyes? Does He not hear our supplications without physical ears?

Then it is not necessary that He should also speak to us? Nor is it correct to say God spoke in the past but does not speak now. We cannot limit His Word or His discourse to any particular time. He is as ready today to enrich His seekers from the fountain of revelation as He was at any time, and the gates of His grace are as wide open today as they were at any time. It is true, however, that as the need for a perfect law has been fulfilled all law and limitations have been completed. Also all prophethoods, having arrived at their climax in the person of our lord and master, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, have been filled."[16]

If anyone has the desire to know about God and the desire to meet His Maker and to have audience with Him he must go through and learn the ways through the prophet of this age. Just as Moses[as] was for his times, as Jesus[as] was for his times, Hazrat Ahmad[as] is the truth, the light, the way and there is no other door open but his to accomplish the purpose of our creation... meeting our God--Allah.

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2: Divinity of Jesus[as]-Islamic View

A LECTURE DELIVERED BY (Late) MAULANA JALAL-UD DIN SHAMS, IMAM OF THE LONDON MOSQUE IN 1940 AS PART OF A SERIES OF LECTURES ON "WHY THE EARLY CHRISTIANS ACCEPTED ISLAM".

A most extraordinary and unparalleled change occurred in the 7th century of the Christian era. Arabia was an arid and isolated peninsula unaffected by events in the rest of the world. Its population consisted of barbarous tribes mostly nomads, who loved the freedom of the deserts, the starlit sky above, the sandy floor below; despised by others, and dead morally and spiritually. Thomas Carlisle says:

> "To the Arab nation Islam was a birth from darkness into the light."
>
> "Arabia first became alive by means of it. A poor shepherd people roaming unnoticed in its deserts since the creation of the world; a Prophet was sent down to them with a word they could believe; see the unnoticed becomes world notable, the small has grown world great; within one century afterwards, Arabia is at Granada on this end, at Delhi on that."
>
> (Heroes & Hero-Worship)

TWO EMPIRES

Persia and Roman, the two greatest Empires of the time whom Arabia had to face were bitterly opposed to Islam and tried their utmost to destroy this new religion to its infancy but failed. Persians were mainly Zoroastrians, believers in a God of good and a God of evil, Ormuzd and Ahriman, and worshipped fire. The Roman Empire was Christian believing in the Godhead of Jesus Christ and the Trinity. In Egypt Christianity was a flourishing religion. The great Church of Clement, of Origine and of Athanasius, showed the success, which Christianity had achieved in Egypt. But wherever Christianity and Islam met, victory came to Islam, the inhabitants of the countries in which the struggle took place, became Muslim. This happened in Syria, Palestine, Egypt and parts of Africa.

Professor Bosworth Smith writes in his book "Mohammad and Mohammadenism": "great parts of the Berbers of the desert were once Christian and they afterwards changed their religion and became Muslim". (Page 42)

PROFOUND IGNORANCE

In these days everybody can see in modern Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone how Christianity is retreating and followers of Christianity turning towards Islam. Professor B. Smith writes:

"The most recent historian of India remarks that the people of India are drifting slowly but surely toward the religion of the Prophet of Arabia rather than towards Christianity which is freely offered to them but which they are not prepared to accept. If this be true or nearly true how profound the importance to England even from an Imperial point of view of a sympathetic study of the religion."

He adds:

"Yet probably nowhere is there a profound ignorance of Islam and its founder and a greater indifference to what it is doing in the world than in England" (page 55)

Therefore, it is the duty of England, for the sake of close relations with the Muslim world to study Islam and mark its teachings, which caused Christians of the early centuries to adopt this religion.

Many attempts have been made to call the attention of the English people to study Islam but they have not yet made any sincere effort to study Islam and they have not yet made any sincere effort to understand this great religion, which has been adopted by millions of their co-religionists in the past. I like to give you some account of the marvelous teachings of Islam, which attracted the sincere, and the thoughtful among Christians to accept it. When the Holy

Prophet[as] of Islam appeared, the Jews were asserting that they had put Jesus Christ to an "accursed" death; and thus, according to their law they thought they had proved that he was a false prophet, an imposter. They accused him of many other things; that he was the off-spring of sin, for instance.

"CURSED"

On the other hand, Christians believed in the Trinity, and that Jesus[as] was God. According to the Mariamites or worshippers of Mary, the Trinity was God the Father, God the Son and God the Virgin Mary. In spite of their belief in his divinity, they also believed like the Jews, that he died an "accursed" death. St. Paul admits in Galatians III:

> "He was made a curse for us, for it is written 'Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree."

They did not examine the meaning of the word 'cursed'. A man cannot be cursed unless his heart be far from God and empty of His love and knowledge. He must be in error like Satan and at enmity with God. It is for this that Satan is named the Accursed one.

IMPUTATIONS REMOVED BY THE HOLY QUR'AN

The Jews believed that Jesus[as] was "accursed" and had no relation with God and that God's wrath descended upon him, and Christians agreed that undoubtedly he was "cursed", though it was to show his love for the people. But the Holy Qur'an freed him from this curse. Rejecting the claim of the Jews, it proclaimed:

"They slew him not nor caused him to die on the cross, but he was made to appear to them like one crucified; and those who differ about him are certainly in doubt by reason of this fact, they have no knowledge thereof, but only follow conjecture, and they surely did

not kill him and they did not make sure about it."[1]

Thus the Holy Qur'an clears Jesus[as] of the "curse" imputed to him, and proclaims that Jesus[as] was a beloved of God, one of His chosen prophets. The Holy Qur'an also mentions that the Jews were deprived of the spiritual blessings they had enjoyed and the help of God they had had, through their rejection of Jesus[as] and for their accusing Mary[as] of fornication. The declaration of the Holy Qur'an concerning Mary[as] is that she kept her modesty; was an example for the righteous; the angles descended on her; and she was one of the chosen ones of God.

In the Book of the Genealogy of Jesus[as], according to St. Matthew, two of his ancestors, Phares and Zara of Thamar, were sons of fornication, and Booz was a son of Racheb the Harlot. Therefore the Holy Qur'an, acquitting Mary[as] and her son of all blemishes has cleared their ancestry, saying they were the offspring of Adam[as], Noah[as], and Abraham[as], the descendants of Amran chosen of God.

CHARGES OF RUDENESS

The commandment was 'Honor thy father and thy mother' [2] but it appears from Matthew, that Jesus showed a kind of rudeness toward his mother.[3] Therefore the Holy Qur'an has cleared Jesus even of this false charge saying he was dutiful to his mother, that God did not make him insolent, unblessed.[4]

THE TRUE POSITION

Now I come to the main point: what is the real position of Jesus Christ? Was he God as most Christians believe or was he man, a prophet or messenger of God? On this point the Holy Qur'an says thus:

"And when Jesus[as] came with clear argument he said:

'I have come to you indeed with wisdom, and that I may make clear to you of what you differ in. Surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord so fear God and obey me and serve Him; this is the right path" (43:63,64,65). Jesus[as] said: "Surely I am a servant of Allah, He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet" (19:31). Surely they disbelieve who say that Allah is the Messiah the son of Mary[as].[5]

"And the Messiah said: 'O children of Israel! Serve Allah my Lord and your Lord.' Surely whoever associates others with Allah then Allah has forbidden him the garden, and his abode is the fire, and there shall be no helper for the unjust. Certainly they are disbelievers who say Allah is a third person of the three, while there is no God but one, and if they desist not from what they say, a painful chastisement shall befall those among them who disbelieve.

Will they not then turn to Allah and seek from Him remission of sins and forgiveness, and Allah is very forgiving and merciful."[6]

"The Messiah, son of Mary is but an apostle; apostles before him have indeed passed away and his mother was a righteous woman. They both used to eat food. See how We make the communications clear to them, and then behold how they turn away.

"Say, do you serve besides Allah that which has no power at all to do neither harm nor good! And it is Allah who is the most hearing, the very knowing. Say, O' People of the Book; do not exceed the limits in your religious beliefs unjustly, nor follow the desires of a people who have already gone astray before and led many astray from the right path. Those who

disbelieved from among the Children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David[as] and Jesus[as] son of Mary[as]. This was because they disobeyed and used to exceed the limits".[7]

SEVEN POINTS

In these verses the true position of Jesus[as] has been described after clearing him of the charges imputed falsely to him. It is set forth in seven propositions:

(1) Jesus Christ never claimed he was God.

(2) On the contrary, he said, there was only One God "whom we serve and worship"

(3) Jesus[as] was a prophet and a messenger of God; many prophets had passed away before him. If anybody cast cursory glances on the past, he would know at once that since the creation of the world, God never came in person to guide people. He always sent a human being to guide fellow human beings. Jesus[as] was a prophet like any of them. It was a gross error to think he was God come to guide human beings.

(4) Jesus[as] was born of a woman, herself a righteous one. The word 'Mother' in the above verses points out the changes, which come upon a child in the womb of his mother and after his birth. If Jesus[as] was really God, then his mother must have been of the same kind. But as is generally believed, she was a human being. So was her child.

(5) Mary[as] and Jesus[as] both ate food; which indicated that they were both humans. It is apparent that man needs for his sustenance and his system of digestion; so he calls constantly for food. So the use of food by Mary[as] and Jesus[as] shows that, like other human beings these

were not free from the obligations imposed by nature. Therefore the belief that a person subject to all the changes, which come on a man's body, was God is an irrational belief.

(6) Jesus[as] being human was weak; he could do no harm or good to anybody by himself.

(7) Dogmas like the Trinity and that Jesus[as] was God are inventions of the people who follow the desires of pagans.

SUBSTANTIATED BY GOSPELS

The truth of these propositions is validated by the Gospels.

Regarding the first, the Gospels are silent; the claim that Jesus[as] was God is mentioned nowhere in them.

The second proposition is mentioned in Matthew that Jesus[as] said: "Get thee hence Satan: for it is written 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt you serve.[8] Jesus[as] also asked Mary to tell his disciples: "I ascend unto my father and your father, and unto my God and your God".[9]

The third proposition that Jesus[as] was a prophet of God is mentioned in many places in the Gospels. For instance, he said, (and included himself in it):

> "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country".[10]

He also said:

> "Nevertheless I must walk today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem".[11]

He also said:

> "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel".[12] "I seek the will of the father which hath sent me".[13] His disciples also said about him that he was a prophet.[14]
>
> When he went to Jerusalem, the multitude said: "This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth".[15]

The forth proposition does not require any quotations as all the Christians believe that it is so.

The fifth proposition that Jesus[as] used to eat, is mentioned in Matthew:

> "The son of Man came eating and drinking".[16]

Luke says:

> "That he took a boiled fish and a honey-comb and did eat before his disciples."[17.]
>
> In Mark it is mentioned that when his disciple came from Bethany he was hungry.[18]

The sixth proposition that he was a weak being, can be known from his saying:

> "Father all thing are possible unto Thee, take away this cup from me."[19]

He also said:

> "I can of mine own self do nothing, as I hear I judge, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the father which hath

sent me."[20]

The seventh proposition is that the people believe in the Godhead of Jesus[as]; follow in the footsteps of earlier pagans. John M. Robertson in his book "Pagan Christ" writes:

> "A recent criticism has shown that the Christians have only followed previous idolatrous nations in deifying a man."

CHRISTIAN PAGANISM

The first person who sowed the seed of this paganism in Christianity was St. Paul. Against the teachings of Jesus[as], he began to preach to the Gentiles and based his preaching to them on the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus[as], saying, "He was raised from the dead according to my Gospel".[21]

As he was a Roman,[22] and on account of his journey in Syria, etc.; he knew the mentality of the Gentiles, so he based his preaching on ideas current among them already, and which they could easily assimilate. For instance, Adonis, the Syrian God, was born of a virgin, was killed, and rose again in the spring every year. The maidens wept for him, and then rejoiced over his resurrection. Concerning Osiris, their God, they believed that he was slain and his image was placed in a box and brought forth with cries of "Osiris is Risen". Attis, the Phrygian God, was also born of a virgin named Nana. He was bled to death at the foot of a pine tree, that his blood renewed the fertility of the earth and thus brought a new life to humanity, and that he also rose from the dead (Frazer's Golden Bough IV, p. 29). Bacchus was also born of a virgin named Demeted on December 25th. He was slain to redeem humanity and was, therefore, called The Slain One, The Sin Bearer, and The Redeemer. His death followed by resurrection was celebrated. When dead, he descended into Hell, rose again (Blausobre, also Higgins' "Anacalypsis" vol. I p. 322).

The Greeks claimed that Bromseus was a God who united his divinity with humanity. So he is of dual origin: divinity and humanity, in one body, man and God at the same time.

Luly Hook, a French missionary, writes in his Travels of Hook (vol. I p. 321) concerning Buddha:

"The Buddhists consider him to be a God in human shape that he is a God who appeared incarnate, came to this world to teach men, to guide them, to redeem them, and to build for them the path to peace. The belief of redemption through a God appearing in body is general among the Buddhists."

Allan, in his India-Ancient and Modern page 297 writes, "As for Krishna, he is the greatest of all the gods incarnate, there is none of them but a small particle from the Godhead while he is the God Vishnu who appeared in body."

The learned Done in his book (p. 112) writes: that one of the beliefs of the ancient idolaters is connected with incarnation that God, incarnate as man, descends and lives among men. The belief is described in various ways from the imagination and stories of the Orientals.

So the truth of the Qur'anic propositions, that Christians in taking Jesus[as] as God followed the desires of pagans is as clear as sun from the students of ancient idolatry. Therefore, God says in the Holy Qur'an:

"And when Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary: did you say to men accept me and my mother for two gods besides Allah? He will say: Glory be to Thee. It did not befit me to say that which I had no right to say. If I had said it Thou wouldst have known it. Thou know what is in my mind, but I don't know what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou

are the great knower of the unseen things. I did not say to them but what Thou didst command me to say, that is, serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord."[23]

SOME ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Now let us examine the divinity of Jesus[as] from another point of view, the point of view of the distinctive attributes of God. The Holy Qur'an says:

"There is no God but Allah. He is ever living, self-subsisting and does neither slumber nor sleep. For Him is whatever is in the Heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who can intercede with Him but with His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything of His knowledge, except what He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them tires Him not and He is the Most High, the Great."[24]

This verse points especially to the following attributed of God.

> 1. Ever-Living, 2. Self-Subsisting, 3. Free from sleep, slumber and fatigue, 4. King and possessor of whatever is in the Heavens and on Earth, 5. All-Knowing and 6. Most High and Great.

ATTRIBUTES CONFIRMED BY THE BIBLE

> These attributes of God are also mentioned in the Bible. Isaiah says, "The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary".[25] Jeremiah[as], the Prophet says, "The Lord is a Living God and an Everlasting King".[26] "God is the King Eternal, Immortal".[27]

ATTRIBUTES OF JESUS

But Jesus[as] was born of Mary[as] and used to sleep; as once he fell asleep in the ship (Matt. 8:24) and he tasted the cup of death. Neither was he self-subsisting. He said, "As the Living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father."[28]; "Jesus liveth by the power of God."[29] "God is the King of all the earth"[30]; "For Him all that is in the Heavens and on the earth.[31] Jesus[as] Christ said: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nests, but son of man hath not where to lay his head."[32] He did not possess even a small portion of the earth.

God is All-knowing. "He knoweth the secrets of the heart".[33] "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God".[34] But Jesus[as] was not all-knowing. As he said, "But of that day and that Hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the Father".[35]

NOT GOD

One day, being hungry and seeing a fig tree afar having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon, but he found nothing but leaves.[36] He also confessed that he was not the Most High and Greatest. "My Father is greater than I".[37] If it is true that God is ever living, everlasting, Almighty[38] and, as Jesus[as] said, "With men this is impossible but with God all things are possible".[39]; if it is true that God is free from all human infirmities as slumber, sleep or weariness, that He is the King and Possessor of the Earth and Heaven, All-knowing and Most High and Great; and if it is also true, as proved by the quotations from the Gospels that Jesus[as] did not possess any of these divine attributes, then rational and reasonable men have no choice but to believe that Jesus[as] was not God.

SON OF MAN

In all the verses of the New Testament nowhere is there any mention

of the word "Trinity", or "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost". On the contrary, we find that in as many as seventeen (17) verses it says that the Father is the One and only God. Verses in which the Father is given the name God with all glory and dignity are 320 in number. Verses which mention the Father as God with special attributes are 105 in number. Verses in which it is said that prayer and praise should be offered to the Father alone, as the only possessor of dignity and power are 90 in number. In 63 places Jesus[as] is called "son of man", in 72 places, "man" only, and in 19 places "a prophet" and in many places "servant and master". In 20 places God is called "The God of Jesus" and Jesus[as] himself cried, "O my God; why hast Thou forsaken me?" In nearly 300 places, it is mentioned that Jesus[as] could not act from his own self that he was not self-subsisting, and that he did according to the commandments of God and according to His Will. But despite these clear passages of the Gospels, Christians rely on some obscure and vague sentences and say that Jesus Christ claimed to be God.

OBSECURE AND VAGUE

This is a large subject, which for the shortness of time at my disposal; I am unable to deal with fully. Let me mention, however, one or two passages out of the Gospels. For instance, Jesus Christ said: "He that hath seen me hath seen God".[40] The Christians say it means that Jesus[as] and God were one. But a little thought will tell everyone that the word "seeing" in this saying is used metaphorically.

"Because no man has seen God, nor can see".[41] Philip asked him to show them the Father, but he replied, "that the Father cannot be seen with physical eyes, but He shows Himself by His works through His prophets".

The Holy Prophet of Islam also said: "Who hath seen me hath seen God."

They mean that the attributes of God are manifest in them. Jesus[as] also said: "I am in my Father and ye in me, and I in you",[42] but nobody says that his disciples were also God.

"BEFORE ABRAHAM"

Christians also say that the meaning of the saying of Jesus[as]: "Before Abraham was I am" shows that he was God. But his being before a created person, Abraham[as], does not mean that he was an ever-living and everlasting person. If we read the conversation, which took place, in this connection, between the Jews and Jesus[as], we will understand the true meaning of this sentence. Thus he said: "If a man keeps my commands he shall never see death",[43] but the Jews took him literally and said:

> "Art thou greater than our Father Abraham, which is dead, and prophets are dead, whom makest thyself?"

Then Jesus answered:

> "Your Abraham rejoices to see my day, he saw it and was glad."

Nobody can say that Jesus Christ meant Abraham[as] actually saw his days. It only means that he saw this in a state of vision. But the Jews took his answer literally and said: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham[as]?" He answered: "Verily, verily, I say unto ye, before Abraham was I am"; which means: "Are you surprised at my saying that Abraham[as] saw my day? I was before him also, as it was decided by God that I should be the Messiah."

So, Jesus[as]' conversation was spiritual and metaphorical, not literal. But even as the Jews took it literally, so do the Christians. His saying was similar to that of the Holy prophet of Islam[sa]'s when he said:

"I am a prophet while Adam[as] had not yet been born."

'SON OF GOD"

Jesus[as] said: "I am the son of God".[44]

He was a son of God as the other prophets and the righteous ones were sons of God.

"The peacemakers shall be called the children of God."[45]

'Your Father is one which is in Heaven."[46]

Adam[as] was a son of God.[47]

God said: "Israel is my son, even my firstborn."[48]

"Judges are Gods, and all of you sons of God."[49]

Regarding Solomon[as], God said: "He shall be my son, and I will be his Father".[50]

"And all the sons of God shouted for Joy".[51]

Jesus Christ himself explained the meaning of his sonship for when the Jews said: "We have one Father, even God", Jesus[as] answered:

> "If God were your Father, then you would love me as He sent me. You are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father will ye do (John 8:38). So, just as the Jews were sons of the Devil for rejecting truth and following their lusts, likewise, Jesus[as] was the son of God for obeying the commandments of God. Further, according to St. Mark, the Centurion said: "Truly Jesus was the son of God".[52] "Certainly he was a

righteous man".[53] This shows clearly that the word "son of God" was used for righteous men.

The wonders and miracles which Jesus[as] performed were not a proof of his divinity because he said that the false prophets shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect.[54] The wicked will do great wonders so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.[55] Moreover, Jesus[as] said concerning his disciples, that they would not only perform the works as he had done but even greater. Therefore, there is no saying of Jesus Christ in the Gospels to justify Christians in their assertion that Jesus[as] was God. Christians believe that this same Jesus[as] was God who was born of a woman, was circumcised, ate, slept, had no place in which to lay his head, was poor, mocked by the Jews, slapped, crowned with thorns, spat at, abused, despised and finally put on the cross, who cried out: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" and who died an "accursed" death, was buried and: went down into Hell."

(Common Prayers Church of England, p. 163).

ONLY A PROPHET

The Holy Qur'an taught that Jesus[as] was one of the chosen prophets of God like other great prophets, who came to guide the people. That God loved him so much, spoke to him abundantly, gave him many signs and clear proofs in support of his truth. He gave him wisdom and knowledge of the Book; and teachings in which was light and guidance for the people. He suffered the afflictions of his enemies and bore them steadfastly, as indeed did the other prophets. Thus this was the reason that Christians, who entered into religious controversy with Muslims, found that the true position of Jesus Christ was, that which is stated in the Holy Qur'an. Therefore, they became Muslims. We believe, on the basis of prophesies, that when the people of this country pay attention to religion and begin to

inquire into the true religion, they will accept Islam and become Muslims, as did their predecessors in the East.

We are sure this will happen, that only one God will be worshipped in the world.

May God bring that day near. Amen,

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38. Exodus 6:1
39. Mathew 20:26
40. John 14:9
41. Timothy 6:16
42. John 14:20
43. John 8:51
44. John 10:36
45. Mathew 5:9
46. Mathew 23:9
47. Luke 2
48. Exodus 4:22-23
49. Psalms 82:6
50. 1 Chronicles 22:10, 17:23
51. Job 38:7
52. Mark 15:39
53. Luke 23:47
54. Mathew 24:24
55. Revelations 3:13

Word of God - The Holy Qur'an

3: Holy Qur'an-An unparalleled Divine sign
4: Abrogation of the Holy Qur'an's verses

3: Holy Qur'an-
An unparalleled divine sign

A miracle (Divine Sign) is defined by the Webster's dictionary as:

1. An extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs.

2: An extremely outstanding or unusual event, thing, or accomplishment.

These definitions apply to the Holy Qur'an when we examine its language and content.

Holy Qur'an in Arabic Language:

"We have revealed it — the Qur'an in Arabic — that you may understand."[1]

"And if We had made it a Qur'an in a foreign tongue, they surely would have said, 'Why have not its verses been made clear? What! a foreign tongue and an Arab?' Say, 'It is guidance and a healing for those who believe.'"[2]

First exceptional feature of the Holy Qur'an that distinguishes it from all other revealed books is that it was revealed in Arabic language. There are many aspects to this exceptional feature.

1. Arabic is a living language. Whether it is Ancient Hebrew, Sanskrit or Aramaic, all the languages in which the revealed or sacred texts existed are not living languages anymore. Arabic not only is a living language but has adopted the terminology and the style of Holy Qur'an in everyday use.

2. Holy Qur'an just does not use the Arabic language but it has devised a sophisticated system within the language with its own terminology. This is something that was impossible to be done by a person who could not read or write.

The Promised Messiah[as] has explained it and described that it uses a root system which is designed by God himself. There are ten roots which are distinctly used by God that it reflects its perfection in the use of the Arabic language.

> "-1st root system is in which existence of God, divine attributes, names, actions and habits are set which are specifically special to Allah alone.
>
> -2nd Root system is in reference to the Unity of God and providing proofs in its support.
>
> -3rd root system is in which the actions of the creatures whether good or bad are explained as they are in accordance with God's pleasure or against His pleasure.
>
> -4th root system provides the rights of the Creator and the creatures explaining the moral qualities and commandments. (Munkir and Maroof.)
>
> -5th root system explains what makes a believer who has achieved salvation and what the means of achieving salvation are.
>
> -6th root system set out the discussion what is Islam, Shirk (making equals of God), disbelief etc.
>
> -7th root system refutes the arguments of the opponents of Islam.
>
> -8th root system is used to describe the warnings and the good news as well as the world of hereafter. It also describes the miracles and prophecies.
>
> -9th root system is comprised of the life and the attributes of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa].
>
> -10th root system describes the qualities of the Holy Qur'an and its characteristics."[3]

Holy Qur'an describes itself:

> "This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it; *it is* guidance for the righteous."[4]

> "This (the Qur'an) is a clear demonstration to men, and a guidance and an admonition to the God-fearing."[5]
>
> "And, indeed, We have made the Qur'an easy *to understand and* to remember. But is there anyone who would receive admonition?"[6]

The Holy Qur'an is the only book that describes itself and makes claims as to what it is and it is set out to accomplish. The other revealed books have no such claims. The followers of other faiths may make claims about their books but the books do not.

Claims of Holy Qur'an in fact were proven to be true.

It provided the guidance to the people who became the shining stars of the world in all aspects of knowledge, spiritual as well as secular knowledge. People who were known to be savages, had no culture or education and were the lowest of the low were transformed by the Holy Qur'an in a few years, not decades or centuries, to be the honored and revered leaders of the world.

The best example of the proof that the Holy Qur'an's teaching is practical was the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] who was the personified Qur'an. His character as a father, friend, leader, soldier, husband, spiritual guide and a commander was all proof that the claim of Holy Qur'an of being the guidance for the righteous was absolutely true and correct.

Practical teachings:

It should be noted that any book that teaches principles and commandments to better the spiritual condition of the human beings must be practical. If the teachings are such that they are impossible or impracticable then the teaching is good to hear and

feel good about but has no practical value. If the Bible teaches that if someone smites your one cheek you turn the other to him, how many people are there who practice it? The proof that Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] became the personified Qur'an is very essential to understand this point. The Holy Prophet[sa] proved by his example that the Qur'an was a practical teaching and a person can reach to heights of not only a righteous person but can even graduate to the level of prophets.

The question arises that if the righteous are described as the people who believe in Allah, the prophets, angels, books and the Day of Judgment as well as they spend from which Allah has provided them, then what is left for the Holy Qur'an to provide guidance.

Holy Qur'an takes a righteous person and can develop him into a person whose actions are **all** for the sake of Allah. He does not spend a portion of what Allah has given him but spends it all for Him. His life, his actions, his motives and his total behavior are in the pleasure of Allah. That is the station of the Holy Prophet[sa] in its perfection.

Claims of the Holy Qur'an:

The Holy Qur'an claimed that it is a book which would be **oft repeated** and it has made a claim especially about the seven oft-repeated verses which is the *Surah Fatiha* (First chapter of the Holy Qur'an). It is a miracle and is unprecedented that a few verses are repeated so often that it boggles the human mind. Muslims repeat these verses in all five daily prayers. Millions of Muslims have been repeating these verses all over the world for centuries since they were revealed as part of the Holy Qur'an. Depending upon the Muslim whether he is only performing the obligatory prayers or if he does even the *Sunnah* and the *Nafls*, he may repeat these verses anywhere from 17 times to 30 times or even more in a day. If we

multiply this number for every day for every Muslim performing the *Salat* and then multiply it for the number of years he does it and then multiply it for hundreds of years Muslims have been repeating these verses, it adds up to a real huge number.

How beautifully and factually the words of the Holy Qur'an have proven to be true which could otherwise been just a claim.

The Holy Qur'an is also memorized by thousands and thousands of Muslims. In the verse quoted above the Holy Qur'an claimed that it is easy to memorize. It has many aspects to it but I would just mention two of them. How many people do you know who have memorized the Bible or even just the New Testament?

One is that it preserved the Holy Qur'an since its revelation in the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Its text was memorized and thus safe and verified by so many that an error would be pointed out immediately.

The other aspect is that memorizing the Holy Qur'an gives a person the understanding of the Holy Qur'an in its entirety. It is a book that provides proofs of its arguments and answers question that arise in different places in the book itself. When a person knows the whole Qur'an, it helps him identify where the answer lies for a particular question raised in the mind at a different place. Memorization of the Holy Qur'an is directly related to the fact that this book has internal explanations and does not require outside help for explanations.

A perfect Book:
-It has a clear purpose:

"And We have not sent down to thee the Book except that thou mayest explain to them that concerning which they differ, and as a guidance, and a mercy for a people who believe."[7]

"And *remember* the day when We will raise up in every people a witness against them from amongst themselves, and We will bring thee as a witness against these. And We have sent down to thee the Book to explain everything, and a guidance, and a mercy, and glad tidings to those who submit *to God."*[8]

"And this is a Book which We have sent down; *it is* full of blessings. So follow it, and guard against *sin* that you may be shown mercy."[9]

-It has nothing against reason:

> "Will they not, then, meditate upon the Qur'an? Had it been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much disagreement."[10]
>
> "And thus have We revealed it as a clear judgment."[11]

When a script is consistent with reason and logic, it makes sure that human conscience does not get agitated because of illogical discussions and they are forced to believe in it only as a matter of faith.

-It has nothing against science:

Holy Qur'an is not a book of science. However, so far, there is no scientific discovery that has been found to be in contradiction with any verses of the Holy Qur'an. Whether it was the discovery that the earth is round or the evolution of the human development, it was all consistent with the statements of the Holy Qur'an.

Another point that needs to be understood is that this consistency helps solidify the concept of oneness of God as compared to other scriptures. Holy Qur'an clearly infers that the word of God and act of God are the same.

-It speaks of other faiths:

Holy Qur'an is the only book that talks about other faiths and other prophets with respect, and describes their relationship with Allah. This is a unique feature which is not found in any other religious scriptures. As a matter of fact it is the favor of the Holy Qur'an that it reminded human beings about the previous prophets as representatives of God who worked hard to transform mankind in their land, and were a blessing for their respective peoples. It has restored respect to these prophets which otherwise were being ridiculed. It was the Qur'an that praised Noah[as] as a pure and righteous prophet of God as compared to the one mentioned in the Bible as one getting drunk and dancing naked in a garden. It was the Qur'an that restored dignity to Moses[as], Jesus[as], Joseph[as] and so many of other prophets of God.

The main principle that Holy Qur'an has established is not to be found in any other faith. It says:

> "We make no distinction among any of the prophets."[12]

In other words, to be a true believer and a favorite of God, you must accept that all prophets were true. This is not a matter of courtesy or appeasing gesture, it is a matter of faith.

-Its knowledge is not imitated:

> "And if you are in doubt as to what We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a Chapter like it, and call upon your helpers beside Allah, if you are truthful."[13]

> "Say, 'If mankind and the Jinn gathered together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even though they should help one another."[14]

So many challenges have been made throughout the history of Islam but no one has been able to produce the like of Qur'an. Promised Messiah[as] has stated:

> "Of the two I shall now describe the second, the power to communicate knowledge. As an example I cite the miracle of language, a spiritual inheritance from his master, the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and the blessings of God). This miracle was not given to earlier prophets. About the Holy Qur'an a unique claim was first made:
>
> 'And if you are in doubts as to what We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call upon your helpers besides Allah, if you are truthful.

This challenge of the Holy Qur'an claims unique merit for the language and contents of the Holy Qur'an. The challenge is accompanied by the warning that those who deny the Holy Qur'an will never be able to produce anything like it. The merit of the Holy Qur'an to which the challenge pertains comprehends everything - its spiritual and moral teaching, its prophecies, its appeal, and not least its language and style. The challenge is addressed to all and sundry. Let them all match their literary productions with the Holy Qur'an. In one place we read:

> 'This is a Book whose verses have been made unchangeable and then have been expounded in detail. It is from the One, Wise and Aware.'"[15]

Translation of Holy Qur'an:

The Holy Qur'an has such deep knowledge that it can be said that as soon as a commentary of the Holy Qur'an is prepared it is obsolete. It is no different than the computer we buy today is obsolete because

a new version is on the shelves.

It has knowledge which unfolds with time and therefore all the meaning and interpretation cannot be captured in any particular time frame. An example of this is *Surah Takvir* in which there are prophecies about the latter days, the time we are living in. In this chapter the Holy Qur'an talks about our times as follows:

"And when the mountains are made to move, And when the she-camels, ten-month pregnant, are abandoned, And when the beasts are gathered together, And when the seas are made to flow forth *one into the other*, And when people are brought together, and when the girl-child buried alive is questioned about, 'For what crime was she killed?' And when books are spread abroad."[16]

Until the 19th century it would have been difficult to observe what the Holy Qur'an had predicted 1300 years earlier. We know what it means now because we have seen the mountains move from one place to another. We have seen how mountains are crushed and changed into highways and buildings with its material. We have seen that the precious ten-month pregnant camel which would bring the highest price in Arabia has been replaced by the trains, buses and planes. We have seen how the oceans are made to flow into each other at Suez and Panama. We have seen how the people have gotten together and formed labor and professional unions. We have seen that we have laws now to bring killers to justice who would bury their daughter alive. And we have seen how the books are printed and have been spread all over the world in unaccountable numbers.

Interpreters before the 19th century could only guess at these things when they read these verses. There were some saintly people who were given the knowledge of the Qur'an through revelations and dreams but they were few.

Translation cannot do justice:

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: *Wallaho **Aalamo** bima yamaloon.*

It is translated as: Allah **knows** what they do.

Then it says: *Wallaho **Yaalamo** bima yamaloon*

It is translated as: Allah **really knows** what they do.

Then it says: *Wallaho **baseerum** bima yamaloon*

It is translated as: Allah **sees** what they do.

Then it says: *Wallaho **Khabirum** bima yamaloon.*

It is translated as: Allah has **full knowledge of** what they do.

When you read the translation in the English language or even in Urdu there is not much difference between "Knows", "really knows", "sees" or "has full knowledge of". Yet, in Arabic four different words have been utilized by the Holy Qur'an in a particular context of the discussion. Please note that all these translations are technically correct.

Aalamo means that Allah knows what they are doing just as anybody else can see what they are doing.

Yaalamo means that Allah has deeper knowledge. He not only knows what is obvious but He also knows what they do in secret that is not apparent to anyone else.

Baseer means that Allah also knows what is behind their actions, why they are doing it and what they want to accomplish with their schemes.

Khabeer means that Allah also knows what the result of their actions is going to be. What stories they are going to make when they are caught, and how ashamed they will be to see the results of their actions.

If the translators were to capture all this, it would not be a translation but would turn into a *Tafseer* or Commentary.

This is just an illustration how deep the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an is in Arabic. It has its own terminology and way of explaining subject matter that is unique. It has explained itself: If all the oceans become ink and all trees turn into paper, you still would not capture all its knowledge.[17]

Most Muslims focus on the reading of the Holy Qur'an in Arabic when they don't understand Arabic but only for the blessing of repeating it. Some of the children even stop reading it in Arabic after the *Ameen* party. It is my suggestion that everyone who does not know Arabic should take one *Rukooh* (paragraph) or even a few verses and look at the different translations and see how different approaches to the Holy Qur'an try to capture the vast ocean of knowledge. This would give them much better understanding and will increase their knowledge of Arabic words and terminology of the Holy Qur'an over time.

Summary:

Holy Qur'an is truly a divine miracle and a blessing and mercy which have been bestowed on the human race for its guidance. It is essential that all of us study it and see how we can make use of it to transform ourselves into better human beings while getting closer to our Creator so on the Day of Judgment we are pleased with Him and He is pleased with us. That is the ultimate goal and the Holy Qur'an can help us get there as it has done for millions of others over the past few hundred years. Human beings will not see

another miracle like it because Allah has already stated that He has perfected His religion for us. With time, as new discoveries will be made in the scientific arena, new interpretations will be revealed to us consistent with the needs of times.

The Promised Messiah[as] has declared:

> "The Holy Qur'an is a Book which has proclaimed its own matchlessness and has claimed its own greatness, its wisdom, its truth, the beauty of its composition and its spiritual lights. It is not true that Muslims have themselves put forward these excellences on behalf of the Qur'an. It sets out its own merits and excellences and puts forward its matchlessness and peerlessness as a challenge to the whole creation and calls out loudly: Is there any contestant? Its verities and fine points are not confined to two or three which would leave room for doubt on the part of an ignorant person, but are like the surging ocean and are visible in every direction like the stars of heaven. There is no truth that lies outside it. There is no wisdom that is not comprised in it. There is no light that is not obtainable through following it. These things are not without proof and are not mere words. It is an established and clearly proved verity which has been shining through 1300 years. We have set out this verity in great detail in this book (*Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya*) and have expounded the fine points of the Qur'an at such length as to constitute a surging ocean for the satisfaction of a seeker after truth."[18]

References

1. Holy Qur'an 12:3
2. Holy Qur'an 41:45
3. Minan ul Rahman, Roohani Khazain vol 9, pp 150-152 footnote
4. Holy Qur'an 2:3
5. Holy Qur'an 3:139
6. Holy Qur'an 54:41
7. Holy Qur'an 16:65
8. Holy Qur'an 16:90
9. Holy Qur'an 6:156
10. Holy Qur'an 4:83
11. Holy Qur'an 13:38
12. Holy Qur'an 2:286
13. Holy Qur'an 2:24
14. Holy Qur'an 17:89
15. Invitation to Ahmadiyyat by Khalifatul-MasihII,(http://www.alislam.org/books/invitation/arg9.html.
16. Holy Qur'an 81:4-11
17. Holy Qur'an 31:28
18. Brahin Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khazain vol 1, pp662-665 footnote 11

4: Abrogation of the Holy Qur'an's Verses

1. Concept of Abrogation:

Concept of Abrogation or *Nasikh/Mansookh* is something that generally Muslims have left to the scholars and commentators. It is something of a mystery, too complicated and better left to the academia. Most Muslims do not engage in any discussion in reference to Abrogation. They don't feel that it has any impact on their daily activities or observance of their faith.

It is essential to know about abrogation because it does have an impact how the rest of the world looks at us as well as how certain groups within Islam have taken advantage of this baseless theory.

Going back and looking back at when this notion of abrogation started, it is important to see the historical background and the transition that took place in reference to it over the centuries.

Khwarijis were the first people who started to use the word of abrogation in propagating their case of opposition to the *Khilafat* of Hazrat Ali[ra]. However, it was not until a few hundred years later that the use of abrogation of verses of the Holy Qur'an started to expand, especially in the time of the Muslim kings who wanted to justify certain actions and not give the impression they were disregarding the *shariah* or the clear commandments of Allah. Initially, they would get some scholars to find a *Hadith* in favor of what they wanted to do whether it was authentic or not, and in some extreme situation even make up a *Hadith*. Rewards from the kings were too lucrative. Later on, they started the use of abrogation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an to accomplish their objectives.

In addition to this use of abrogation, some scholars and commentators who could not reconcile some verses of the Qur'an began to say that those particular verses were abrogated thus disregarding one verse over the other. According to the research done by Mr. Muhammad Asad who has translated the Qur'an in English as well, the scholars used two methods to explain away

when they were confused about some verses of the Qur'an and could not explain. One was the theory of abrogation and the other was *Asbab Nazool* (background of revelation*)*.

It was the easy way out for them to say that one verse has replaced the other so it does not have to be reconciled or, *Asbab Nazool*, that the reason and/or background for its revelation was for a particular circumstance and that its use was confined to that time or instance and it does not matter anymore. There was no unanimity among the upholders of the doctrine of abrogation as to which and how many verses of the Qur'an were abrogated, and if the verse itself was abrogated so it does not need to be recited anymore, or only the message contained in the verse was abrogated.

In the time of Imam Jalaluddin Sayuti the number of verses alleged to be abrogated was brought down to 500 from a much higher number. Imam Sayuti brought this figure down to 21 verses because he could explain and reconcile all the other verses questioned in the past. Shah Waliullah Dehilvi provided explanation and understanding of all the verses but was left with 5 verses that he considered abrogated.

So by the 19th century, we were left with only 5 verses which were still subject to debate whether they were abrogated or not.

2. Abrogation issue used currently:

Recently, there is another wave of so called "scholars" of Islam who have initiated the discussion of abrogation of verses of the Holy Qur'an. As in the past, there is a political agenda and justification of their extremist views and objectives that are at the root of these announcements. Credibility of the Holy Qur'an is also at stake.

Most recently in addition to the *Wahabi* sect, there are the *Salafis* who have come up with new interpretations to force their extreme views and against establishing good relations with other religions. They are issuing *fatwas* that the verses promoting peace, humility

and kindness which were revealed in Mecca have been abrogated and the verses in reference to the Jihad of sword revealed in Medina have replaced them. Therefore verses such as *La ikraha fiddin* (There is no compulsion in religion) are abrogated and the verses commanding to kill the Christians and Jews which related to the war time should be practiced. These baseless, illogical and meritless *fatwas* are being repeated by some in the USA and Western media to show how intolerant Islam is, thus promoting the ideas and agenda of the self-serving extremist with particular political aims while majority of the Muslims have nothing to do with this type of thinking.

Their concept of this great Jihad against other religions is clearly not in line with the commandment of the Holy Qur'an. Allah says:

So obey not the disbelievers and fight against them by means of it (the Qur'an) a great fight.[1]

The Holy Qur'an has commanded us to do the Jihad-e-*Kabeer* with the help of the Qur'an but in their view the only Jihad is with guns and bombs.

The other aspect of this new wave of *fatwas* and interpretation is, for example, promoted by groups like the Taliban in reference to the personal morality issues. They interpret and want to implement the extreme interpretation instead of flexibility preached by Islam. The fact is that their application of these personal morality laws has nothing do with Islam or the practice of the Holy Prophet[sa]. Just to mention one example, they profess to stone to death the adulterers while there is no mention of it in the Qur'an whatsoever.

Let us review the verse that the proponents of the abrogation theory use to justify their viewpoint. They quote verse below:

"Whatever Sign (verse) We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than that or the like thereof. Dost thou not know that Allah has the power to do all that He wills?"[2]

The fact is that it has been taken out of context. If you read the verses before and after it, it becomes clear that it refers to the replacements of revelation of other faiths. Allah states that He sends another revelation to replace it when He sees the need for it. The verse is referring to the Holy Qur'an which is replacing the Torah and the Gospels and other revealed verses of Allah. There is discussion about *Bani Israel* (Children of Israel) in this whole context and therefore it is a clear indication that it is in the context of past revelations being replaced by the Qur'an.

3. No foundation for abrogation:

There is absolutely no foundation for the theory of abrogation. When a writer publishes a book, the only person that can abrogate some text from it or replace it with something else is the writer himself, the editor or the publisher. This holds true in the case that the writer's research has made him come up with a different theory or has improved his presentation based on new facts or in some circumstances he may want to clear up some contradictions in his writing. In other cases such as a Constitution, there are mechanisms within the document how it can be changed such as through amendments.

It would be only Allah Himself or the Holy Prophet[sa] who could abrogate or replace the words of the Qur'an since Allah was revealing the words and the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was communicating it to the world. It is absurd to attribute to Allah that he would change his statements because He is the All-Knowing and therefore there cannot be any reason to correct the statements made by Him. The same is true about contradictions. Allah cannot have any contradiction in His word. In addition, there is not a single *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet[sa] mentioning or even having any hint about abrogation of any verse of the Holy Qur'an. There is not even a single *Hadith* that is connected to any of his companions.

On the other hand, there is clear evidence against the theory of abrogation in the document itself - the Holy Qur'an. It was the demand of the opponents of the Holy Prophet[sa] that he should change certain verses of the Qur'an or at least dilute them in the cause of unity of the nation and as a compromise. Their plan was mischievous and tricky because if the Holy Prophet[sa] went ahead and changed some verses or abrogated them, the opponents would announce that he is the one writing this book, it is not the word of God. On the other hand, if he would not change it as demanded they would blame him for not making an effort to compromise and unite the nation. Another interesting aspect of it was that they did not say that they would accept the faith if he went ahead with the changes. They were only doing it as peacemakers and uniters of the nation.

The Holy Qur'an refers to their demand and the response of the Holy Prophet[sa] in the following verses:

"They wish that thou should compromise so that they may also will compromise."[3]

"And when Our clear Signs are recited unto them, those who look not for the meeting with Us say, 'Bring a Qur'an other than this or change it.' Say, 'It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I only follow what is revealed to me. Indeed, I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the punishment of an awful day.'"[4]

"Say, 'If Allah had so willed, I should not have recited it to you nor would He have made it known to you. I have indeed lived among you a whole lifetime before this. Will you not then understand?"[5]

The Holy Prophet[sa] has emphatically and in clear terms rejected the theory of abrogation according to this verse. As he stated, it was not for him to change any verse whatsoever for whatever cause

or reason. The other point has been made in this verse is that he was known to the people all his life. His character was such that he was known to be *the truthful* so how could he all of a sudden change what Allah had revealed to him because then he would not be considered truthful about what was revealed to him.

4. Holy Qur'an's testimony against abrogation:

In essence, the theory of abrogation is totally refuted by the Holy Qur'an and as such the way the verses declare, by the Holy Prophet[as] as well.

As I have mentioned above, by the 19th century there were only 5 verses left to be resolved and reconciled. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was not a spiritual teacher nor considered to be among the religious scholars. He was known for the establishment of the Muslim university at Aligarh and thus served the Muslims of India in a great way. He stated that on the grounds of logic there can be no abrogation of any verses of the Holy Qur'an. He also provided his explanation of the 5 verses that Shah Waliullah Dehlevi had left unexplained, and proved that there was no contradiction in the Holy Qur'an and therefore no abrogation of any verses.

The interesting development is that the verses being announced as abrogated by the *Wahabis* or *Salafis* or the *Talibans* are none of the 5 verses that were left over in the 19th century. So the scholars and commentators in the history of Islam never considered these verses of Jihad to be abrogated. These are being selected based on the political and mischievous goals of some of the extremists to fool the masses of Muslims and to take advantage of their emotional devotion to Islam, the Holy Prophet[sa] and Holy Qur'an.

The five verses which were left over from 500 or 600 and now have been resolved were:

2:181 relates to inheritance issue,

2:241 relates to maintenance of widows and her options,

8:66 relates to equivalency of believers to match the non-believers in battle,

33:53 relates to the commandment in reference to the marriages of the Holy Prophet[sa],

58:13 relates to charity to be paid before the consultation with the Holy Prophet[sa].

Just to give an illustration, without spending the time on all five verses, as to how simple and logical it is to refute the theory of abrogation, let us look at verse 8:66. The Holy Qur'an states in one verse that 20 believers can overtake 200 non-believers in a battle. In the next verse it says that 100 believers can win over an army of 200 non-believers. So the issue is raised that in one instance it is a ratio of 1:10 and the other is 1: 2. Therefore, the proponents of abrogation theory say that the verse with 1:10 ratio is abrogated and the one with 1:2 has replaced it.

The fact is that both verses are giving a true picture. At the time of the first battles of Islam such as at Badr, Muslims could handle twice the number of their opponents. At that time, there were even youngsters 12 and 13 years old going to battle without proper ammunition or mounts. So the ratio of 1:2 was amazing and that is what Allah was referring to. Later on when the Muslim armies were fighting the Romans and the Persians they did overcome the armies which were ten times larger in size. So depending on the circumstances both number were true. There is no contradiction and no need to abrogate or replace any verse.

Promised Messiah's total disagreement with abrogation theory:

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] of Qadian took a different approach and he presented it such that the theory of abrogation became a non-issue. The discussion on **which** verses and **why** did not need to take place. He announced on the authority of the Holy Qur'an that it was a perfect book, it has no contradictions and if there is something that we cannot explain, it is due to the weakness or lack of our understanding. It is the human lack of understanding and confusion which may lead one to theorize that some verse is abrogated. However, if even one verse, or word or even an iota is abrogated then the whole book becomes suspicious and unreliable.

He explained his position solely based on the Holy Qur'an itself. It says:

> *"Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We will be its Guardian."*[6]

The protection of the text of the Qur'an is guaranteed by Allah Himself so there cannot be any changes made to it. The Holy Qur'an says:

> *"Will they not, then, meditate upon the Qur'an? Had it been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much disagreement."*[7]

This verse provides the argument that since the Holy Qur'an is from Allah, there is no contradiction in it. Conversely, if there are contradictions in it then it cannot be from Allah.

The Promised Messiah[as] from the very beginning, in his first book *Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya* took the position and proved it with powerful arguments that the Holy Qur'an is the only book which has been preserved and is devoid of any weaknesses, contradictions and moreover, it provides the solutions to confusing matter within

itself. He described and heavily relied on the internal explanations of the Holy Qur'an. His powerful argument was that not only it does not have any contradictions but any issues that are raised by the human mind are answered by the Holy Qur'an **within itself**. You do not need to look elsewhere for solving the confusing issues.

The Promised Messiah[as] announced in the same book *Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya*:

> "God Almighty, who knows the secrets of the hearts is witness that if someone is able to point out a defect in the teaching of the Holy Qur'an to the extent of a thousandth part of a particle or is able to point out an excellence in his own book, which is opposed to the teaching of the Qur'an and excels it, we would be prepared to submit ourselves to the penalty of death."[8]

This is a brilliant argument and by virtue of it the theory of abrogation cannot exist and therefore there was no need to get into detailed discussions about how many and which verses were abrogated.

The Promised Messiah[as] also explained that some of the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an may not be understood at a certain period of time because of the level of knowledge of human beings at the time. As the time progresses new meanings emerge and the interpretations become clear according to the need of the time. Some verses are *'Bayyinaat"* (clear and straight forward) and some are *"Mutashabihat"* (subject to interpretation). So any confusion at a certain period of time does not make a verse of the Holy Qur'an subject to the theory of abrogation. He explains it in the following quote from his book *Izala Auham*:

> "The verities and fine points which foster understanding are always disclosed according to need. New corruptions call for ever fresh meanings, which are full of wisdom. It is obvious that the Holy Qur'an is a miracle in itself, and the greatness of its miracle is that it is comprehensive of unlimited verities

but they are manifested at their due time. As the difficulties of the time demand, those hidden insights are disclosed. Look! Secular knowledge, most of which is opposed to the Holy Qur'an and is so misleading, is spreading rapidly. Currently, wonderful changes are being brought about in mathematics, physics and philosophy, Was it not necessary that at such time the door to progress in faith and understanding should also have been opened, so the facilities might become available for repelling every new mischief? Know it for certain then that the door has been opened and God Almighty has determined to disclose the hidden wonders of the Holy Qur'an to the arrogant philosophers of the world. Half-baked *Mullahs*, who are the enemies of Islam, cannot frustrate this design. If they do not desist from mischief, they will be destroyed and visited by such Divine wrath that will grind them to dust. These fools do not apprehend the prevailing circumstances. They desire that the Holy Qur'an should appear as defeated, weak, small and insignificant, but it will now march forward like a champion. It will roar like a lion and devour the entire worldly philosophy and shall demonstrate its own supremacy and fulfill the prophecy: "That He may Cause it to prevail over all religions".[9]

At the end I present you a few verses of the Holy Qur'an:

"Nay, I swear by the shooting of the stars — (stations of revelations of Qur'an)

And, indeed, that is a grand oath, if you only knew —

That this is indeed a noble Qur'an,

In a well-preserved Book,

Which none shall touch except those who are purified.

It is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds. [10]

References

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9. Izala Auham, Ruhani Khazain Vol.3,PP 464-467
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Prophet Muhammad[sa]

5: Muhammad[sa] in the Bible
6: Prophet Muhammad[sa] as a Worshipper of God
7: Prophet Muhammad[sa] and Human Rights

5: Muhammad[sa] in the Bible

A LECTURE DELIVERED BY (LATE) J. D. SHAMS, IMAM OF THE LONDON MOSQUE IN 1941 AS PART OF A SERIES OF LECTURES ON "WHY THE EARLY CHRISTIANS ACCEPTED ISLAM".

In an address last year, I said that one of the many reasons why Christians, in countries where a religious struggle took place between Christianity and Islam, became Muslim was the marvelous teachings of the Holy Qur'an relating to the personality of Jesus[as]; being more rational and acceptable than the complicated theological dogmas of the Church.

Today I would like to point to another reason, which led sincere Christians to accept Islam whole-heartedly.

Standard set by Jesus[as]

We read in the Gospel of St. John that, in order to prove the truth of his claim, Jesus[as] referred to Moses' prophecy and rebuked his opponents in these words:

> "For had you believed in Moses ye would have believed in me, for he wrote of me; but if ye believe not in his writings how will ye believe in my words?"[1]

This saying of Jesus[as] clearly shows that appearance of a prophet in accordance with previous prophecies is an absolute proof of his truth; therefore, on the subject of prophecies about the coming of the Holy Prophet of Islam, the Holy Qur'an says:

> "And when there came to them an Apostle from Allah verifying that which they have, a party of those who were given the Book threw the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they knew nothing."[2]

Again, it says that the true believers from whom He will ordain His special mercy are:

> "Those who follow the Apostle Prophet, the *Ummi* whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospels."[3]

Besides these two verses, there are many others in which God has turned the attention of Christians and the Jews to the fact that by rejecting the Holy Prophet[sa] they are rejecting their own Holy Scriptures; the coming of the Holy Prophet[sa] is in proof of their scriptures. Within the limited time at my disposal, I will mention some of the Biblical prophecies relating to the Holy Prophet of Islam.

Promises of God about the Ishmaelites in Genesis

First to Hagar[as]:

> "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly that it shall not be numbered for multitude."[4]

Then to Abraham[as]:

> "This is My covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your skin, and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you."[5]
>
> "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee, behold I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly, twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation."[6]
>
> "And Ishmael was 13 years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin."[7]
>
> "And also of the son of the bondwoman will make a nation because he is thy seed."[8]

God said to Hagar about her son:

> "I will make him a great nation".[9]

These verses make the following points:

1. Ishmael[as] and his descendants were the seeds of Abraham[as].
2. God promised to bless them with spiritual gifts and to make them a great nation like Isaac[as] and his progeny.
3. The circumcision of Ishmael at the age of thirteen leaves no room for doubt that Ishmael[as] was among the progeny of Abraham[as] with whom the covenant had been established.

The blessings of the covenant, as Adam Clark writes in his commentary,[10] were both temporal and spiritual.

Bearing in mind these promises, the verse: "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac."[11] has no other interpretation than that the covenant, which God made with Abraham[as], was first to be fulfilled in Isaac's progeny. It so happened that prophethood remained in the line of Isaac until the time of Jesus Christ, who declared to the Israelites:

> "Nation bringing forth the fruit thereof."[12]

Jesus Christ here clearly predicts that no more was a prophet to appear from amongst the Israelites; rather from among another nation, to wit, the Ishmaelites with whom God had made a promise through Abraham[as]. This promised nation was no doubt the Arabs. For no other nation ever claimed to be the descendants of Ishmael[as].

In commentaries on the verse "And Ishmael will be a wild man, his hand will be against every man."[13] it is mentioned that:

> "This prophecy answers to the character of the Bedouin Arabs, who were always feared and dreaded by other men."
>
> "The Abyssinians, Jews, Persians, Romans and other nations have made war against them, but by no nation, however

> powerful, could they at any time be permanently subdued."
>
> (Arnold, "Koran and Bible" p.125)

Adam Clark says in his commentary that:

> "Bedouins and wandering Arabs are the descendants of Ishmael" and concerning verse 17:20 writes:
>
> "From Ishmael proceed the various tribes of the Arabs, called 'Saracens' by Christian writers."

After depriving the Israelites of their spiritual blessings, God fulfilled His covenant with the Ishmaelites by raising the Holy Prophet of Islam from amongst them. His appearance according to these prophecies was in fulfillment of the prayer of Abraham[as] and Ishmael[as], which they addressed to God, as they raised the foundations of the *Ka'aba*. We read in the Holy Qur'an:

> "Our Lord! And raise up in them an apostle from among them who shall recite to them Thy communications and teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them; surely Thou art the Mighty and Wise."[14]

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet of Islam, Arabs were despised by all nations.

Edward Gibbons writes of the Arabs, in his Decline and Fall: "In this primitive and abject state, which ill-deserved the name of society, the human brute, without arts or laws, almost without sense of language, is poorly distinguished from the rest of the animal creation."

No doubt before the advent of the Prophet, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, most Arabs were as animals in the form of human beings.[15]

Thomas Carlyle has pictured in a few words their condition before and after the coming of the Prophet. He writes:

> "A poor shepherd people, roaming unnoticed in its deserts since the creation of the world, a prophet was sent down to them with a word they could believe. See the unnoticed becomes world-great. Within one century afterwards, Arabia is at Granada on this end, at Delhi on that."
>
> (Heroes and Hero Worship)

The Prophet like unto Moses[as]

After Abraham[as], Moses[as] in 1451 B.C. gave more particulars of this prophet. God revealed to Moses[as] thus:

> "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him, And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him, But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other Gods, even that prophet shall die."[16]

Adam Clark writing about this prophecy in his commentary on the Bible says:

> "This cannot be understood of the ordinary prophets which were raised up in Israel, but of Christ only."

I am sorry to say that we cannot accept this view; and for good reasons:

Firstly: Jesus Christ never claimed to be like Moses[as].

Secondly: Jesus[as] did not fight with his enemies, as Moses[as] did.

Thirdly: Jesus[as] did not bring a New Law containing new ordinances, as Moses[as] did.

Fourthly: We are told in this prophecy that the prophet will be sent from among the brethren of Israelites, i.e. Ishmaelites. The verses 16-17 of this chapter strongly support this view. All the children of Abraham[as] were brethren of Ishmael[as]. (See Genesis 16:-12 & 25-18). But Jesus[as] was not one of the Ishmaelites.

Fifthly: The prophecy further tells us that the prophet "shall speak all that I command him", whereas Jesus[as] says:

> "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now."[17]

Sixthly: I wonder how Christians will reconcile their belief that Jesus[as] was put to death on the cross, with this prophecy, which contains no hint that the prophet shall be killed; rather, it says that the false prophet shall die, i.e. shall be killed and destroyed.

Seventhly: We read in John 1:20 that in the time of Jesus[as], the Jews were awaiting the advent of three persons: Elijah, Christ and the prophet. It shows clearly that Christ and the prophet, according to the belief of the Jews were not one and the same person.

Eighthly: There is proof to support our view in the following saying of Peter:

> "And he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you whom the Heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began."[18]

These words evidently imply that we are to expect the fulfillment of those prophecies before the second advent of Jesus[as].

Peter then continues, and as an example, mentions the prophecy under discussion:

> "For Moses truly said unto the fathers: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up among you of your brethren..."[19]

It is crystal clear from these eight points that Jesus[as] cannot be the object of this prophecy, and that the promised prophet was bound to appear between the First and Second Advent of Jesus Christ. It is no wonder that only Holy Prophet Muhammed[sa] has claimed to be the subject of the prophecy. The seven signs mentioned in it were found precisely in his person.

1. The prophet will be raised from among the brethren of the Israelites. The Holy Prophet of Islam appeared from among the Ishmaelites, brethren of Israelites.

2. He will be the like of Moses[as]. God says in the Holy Qur'an: "Surely we have sent you an apostle to witness against you as We sent apostle to Pharaoh."[20]

   The Holy Prophet[sa] is like Moses[as]. He was also given a new Law, as was Moses[as]. Under the divine will, he had to fight his enemies as had Moses[as].

3. The prophecy states that "God shall put words into his mouth". Thus says the Holy Qur'an: "Nor speaks he of his own inclination. It is but a revelation which is revealed to him."[21]

4. "He shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

The Holy Prophet of Islam was given a complete religion, as the Holy Qur'an says:

"Today, I have completed for you your religion and perfected on you My blessings."[22]

And at the time of the last pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet[sa], looking to heaven while addressing the pilgrims gathered together on the occasion, said:

"O Lord! I have delivered my message and fulfilled my mission!" "Yea, thou hast", was the response of the multitudes listening. "O Lord! I beseech Thee bear Thou witness unto it."[23]

5. "He shall speak in My name". Thus we find that the first chapter that was revealed to the Holy Prophet[sa] says: "Read in the name of your Lord."[24]

Moreover, in fulfillment of this prophecy, every chapter of the Holy Qur'an begins "in the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful". It was the custom of the Holy Prophet[sa] to begin everything in the name of God.

6. "Whosoever shall not hear the words of God which he shall speak in His name, God will require it of him", and it is added in Acts that "he will be destroyed". It is historical fact that the champions of those who did not believe in him and listen to the words of God which he spoke in His name perished; all their false gods and stone idols were destroyed, and only One God came to be worshipped throughout Arabia. The wars of those times were in the nature of divine punishment. God says in the Holy Qur'an:

"Fight them, Allah will chastise them by your hand and bring them in disgrace and assist you against them."[25]

7. The prophecy says: "A false prophet shall die." That is, God will protect the true prophet, so nobody could kill him. Thus God says in the Holy Qur'an:

"O Apostle: Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do it not, you have not delivered His message; and Allah will protect you from the people."[26]

Again He says:

"If this prophet had fabricated against Us some of the sayings, We would have seized him by the right hand and cut out his aorta, and not one of you could have withheld Us from him."[26A] Although he was many times in great danger, yet God protected him, no one could kill him, despite many attempts.

Thus we see that Muhammad[sa] was the prophet foretold by Moses[as] in this prophecy, nearly two thousand years before his appearance. There is no prophet beside him in whom the seven signs mentioned in the prophecy could be found.

The Prophet with Ten Thousand Saints

There is another prophecy contained in Deuteronomy, Moses[as] said: "The Lord came from Sinai and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and in His right hand went a fiery Law for them."[27]

In this verse, the prophets of Sinai and Seir were Moses[as] and Jesus[as] respectively. The third prophet who was to appear from Mount Paran is the Holy Prophet of Islam, descendant of Ishmael[as],

who dwelt in the wilderness of Paran.[28] If we consider the various descriptions of the boundaries of Paran, we come to the conclusion that Mecca along with the whole of Hejaz is included in Paran. The Fatima Valley is a halting place between Mecca and Medina. If you enquire there of the boys who sell flowers, "where do they get the flowers from?" they will reply *"Min Bariyyat-I-Faran"* i.e., "from the wilderness of Paran."

Moreover, the prophecy contains a special sign which cannot be applied to any other than the Holy Prophet of Islam. That is, his coming with ten thousand of saints, which coincides with the number of Muslims who took over Mecca with the Holy Prophet[sa], as mentioned in Bokhari.

I'd like to reproduce here the account of this number briefly from the Life of Mahomet by Emile Dermenghem (London 1930):

> "In the month of Shawwal of the fifth year of the *Hijra*, the Allied (disbelievers) numbering ten thousand, marched against Medina, where there were but three thousand men to oppose them. Never before in the Hejaz had there been such a large army. Then there came upon them (one night while they were besieging Medina) violent and icy winds and one of those downpours of rain characteristic of the Arab winter. In a few minutes, the camp of the Allies was in complete disorder. Tents were uprooted, and blown to a considerable distance, fires were extinguished, pots were overturned, and the horses and camels scattered. Panic reigned. The nomads had no thought but of flying, so Abu Sufyan gave a command to retreat. Three years after the Battle of the Ditch, ten thousand Mussalmans left for Mecca by a circuitous road and pitched camp upon the surrounding heights. Mounted on Qoswa, his camel, at last, the prophet rode into his birthplace, proclaiming, "Truth is come and error is gone" and all the

idols were broken into pieces."

The fiery law, too, refers to the commandments to fight away unbelievers. Thus it is that the prophet who was to come from Mount Paran with ten thousand saints was the Holy Prophet of Islam. His companions were not unjust in their fighting. They fought against the heaviest odds and in defense of their right to believe; they were saints.

In connection with the ten thousand saints, I'd also like to refer to the Song of Songs in which Solomon[as] has described in a romantic way his beloved; according to our view, the Holy Prophet of Islam. He says:

> "My beloved is whole and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand…His mouth is most sweet, yes, he is altogether lovely."[29]

This is the color of the prophet's skin, as recorded in the traditions. The Hebrew of 'altogether lovely' is Mohammadiam, which signifies the name of his beloved. And I have already mentioned that Muhammad[sa] was the chiefest among the ten thousand of his companions who entered Mecca.

Qualities of the Prophet

After Moses, we find David[as] describing his countenance and some other qualities, on which I quote the following from Psalms:[30]

1. Thou art fairer than the children of men.

2. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty with the glory and thy majesty.

3. And in thy majesty, ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness.

Christians assert that it is in Christ and in the mystical union

between God and his church that this Psalm has its true fulfillment. But we Muslims say that the subject of the Psalm is the Holy Prophet of Islam; as only he possesses the qualities mentioned in it.

Muslim historians are unanimous that the Holy Prophet of Islam was the fairest in his countenance. Here I quote descriptions of his appearance by Christian writers:

Edward Gibbon writes in his Decline and Fall:

> "They applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspects, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance that painted every sensation of the soul, and his gestures that enforced each expression of the tongue."

Emile Dermengham writes:

> "Mahomet was in the full vigor of his manhood, robust, or medium height, strong built, with broad chest and massive head; his hands and feet, although large, were fine and sensitive, his skin tanned....From under the turban, his countenance beamed with a majestic radiance at the same time expressive and gentle. People felt that this inspired man was born to command and they obeyed him blindly."

No student of history can deny the majesty and glory, steadfastness and bravery of the Prophet of Islam in carrying out his mission. Take for instance when he denounced their false gods. "The Kuraish, the guardians of the Kaaba, perceived, like the silversmiths at Ephesus that, if this went on, their position would be endangered, and their gains gone. Finding that bribes, threats, and entreaties were alike powerless to deter him, they expostulated kindly with his (Abu Talib's) nephew, 'Should they array against me the sun on my right hand, and the moon on my left,' said Mohammed, 'yet while God should command me, I would not renounce my purpose.' These are not the words, nor this the course, of an imposter," says R. Bosworth

Smith in his book Mohammad and Mohammadanism (p. 119)

Consider this who had subjected him and his followers to the severest persecution, and sought to kill him, and then compare it with what Jesus[as] answered to his brethren when he had given up walking with Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him, and his brethren asked him at the Jews' feast to go into Judea and show his work to his disciples and show himself to the world. He answered them:

> "Go ye up unto the feast: I go not yet up unto this feast, for my time is not yet full come." But when his brethren were one up, then went he also up, unto the Feast, not openly, but as it were in secret."[31]

Likewise, when Peter said unto him that he was the Christ, he blessed him; but at the same time, he charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.[32]

Considering the anarchistic state of the Arabs, and their barbarity and cruelty, every sincere thinker must know that the Holy Prophet of Islam was the object of this Psalm.

The Psalm further tells us that he will be known for his truthfulness, honesty, meekness and righteousness. The Holy Prophet of Islam was commonly credited by his countrymen with these qualities.

Emile Derengham writes:

> "They admired his character, moreover, and gave him the nickname of "El-Amin", the Faithful, the Sincere, the Trustworthy." (Life of Mahomet, P 47)

Washington Irving writes, on authority of Abulfeda a Muslim historian:

> "Allah had endowed him with every gift necessary to accomplish and adorn an honest man; he was so pure and sincere, so free from every thought, that he was commonly known by the name El-Amin, or the Faithful." (Life of Mohammad. P. 33)

> "Once he hurried" writes Emile Derengham "to the hill Safa, and gave the ancient war-cry of the Quraishites. When they assembled, he cried out "If I told you that horsemen were in the valley ready to attack you, would you believe me?" "Yes," they answered, 'We have never heard you lie.'" (Page 75)

He was meek throughout his life. Emile Dermengham has described him thus:

> "Mohamet was neither vain, covetous, nor corrupted by ambition and fanaticism... He was most gentle, sensitive and humane...He was affable with everyone and very simple in his habits. He used to sweep his own bed-chamber, mend his clothes and sandals, milk the ewes, lie on his back on the floor of the Mosque, get up to let in a cat, look after sick cockerel, wipe the sweat from his horse with his sleeve, give alms to the poor whenever he had anything to give, avoid as much as possible anything that gave him the air of being a King. He had neither a Court nor Ministers, only advisors and several secretaries, and a Seal on a silver ring bearing these words: 'Mohammed, the Messenger of God.'" (Life of Mahomet pp. 165-166)

Therefore, it is absolutely clear that the Holy Prophet of Islam was the true fulfillment of the Psalm under discussion.

The Battle of Badr

After David[as], in 714 B.C., Isaiah[as] predicted concerning Arabia in these words:

> "In the forest of Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye traveling companies of Dedanim. The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him they fled. For they fled from the Swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow and from the grievousness of war. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail." (Isaiah 21, 13-16)

Kedar, a son of Ishmael (Gen 25:13) refers here to the Quraish, one of the most powerful of the Arab tribes, whose leaders were killed in the Battle of Badr in which 313 Muslims, a great number of whom were refugees who had fled from Mecca from the drawn sword and the grievousness of war, fought 1000 of the Quraish and achieved victory over them.

Among these 1000, were the leaders and important personalities of the Quraish, most of whom were killed in this battle. The Holy Prophet of Islam, as recorded in Bokhari, after hearing their names, said:

> "Mecca is offering us her liver; i.e., the best of her sons."

This battle took place exactly one year after the flight from Mecca, to which the prophecy also points. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah[as] the prophet:

> "Within a year according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail."

Concerning this prophecy, we read in the Qur'an:

> "And they (the unbelievers) say, "Will this promise be fulfilled, if you are truthful? Say, you have the appointment for a day from which you cannot hold back any while, nor can you bring it on." (Ch. 34: 30-31)

In prophetic language often a day stands for a year. See Clark's commentary on Daniel 12:11.

Thus we see that Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled a year after the flight of the Holy Prophet[sa] from Mecca.

A Spiritual Change in Arabia

Isaiah[as] gives further information about the spiritual changes which took place in Arabia. He says:

> "Sing unto Lord a new song, and his praise unto the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein, the isles and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof (i.e. the cities of the desert) lift up their voices, the villages that Kedar inhabit" (i.e., Arabia), "Let the inhabitants of the rock sing (i.e., inhabitants of the secure cities) let them shout from the top of the mountains, let them give glory unto the Lord and declare his praise in the islands. The Lord shall go forth as mighty man, He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war, he shall cry, yea, he shall roar, he shall prevail against enemies. I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, I will let them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light, before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. They shall be turned back, and they shall be greatly ashamed that truth in graven images, that say to the molten images, "You are our God."[35]

In these verses we have a remarkable description of the Arabs who worshipped graven images as their God, of how spiritually blind

they were, how they stumbled in the darkness; but who, after the coming of the new song, i.e., the Qur'an, were guided to the right path; the darkness turned into light, and crooked things were made straight. In short the whole peninsula, villages, mountains and wilderness, echoed with the believers' cries in praise of God. The call from the lofty minarets was heard throughout the East: God is the greatest; "Allah alone is worthy to be worshipped, and Muhammad[sa] is His Messenger."

In the Hajj (pilgrimage), people of various countries flocked every year to where the *Kedar* lived, and they shouted from the top of the mountains of Mecca the Azan and *Talbiya* i.e., "We are ready, O our Lord, there is no associate with Thee, and all praise and grace belong to Thee."

More Particulars about the Prophet

Leaving the prophecies of some other prophets who followed Isaiah[as], I come to 626 B.C. in which Habakkuk disclosed some new points and particulars about the Holy Prophet of Islam, three of which I like to mention here:

1. "God came from Teman and the Holy one from Mount Paran. His glory covered the Heavens and the earth was full of his praise."[36]

I have already mentioned that Paran is the place where Ishmael[as] and his descendants lived, and the name is used for Arabia. Habakkuk says:

> "I say the tents of Cushan in affliction."[37]

The commentators of the Bible write that Cushan is Arabia. The Arabians dwelt in tents, so they were called "Semites". Therefore, this prophecy is obviously concerned with Arabia, of which the

heavens and all the land were filled with the praise of God, and His glory, in consequence of the appearance of the Holy Prophet of Islam upon whom too, according to the Qur'an, God and his angels in Heaven gave their blessings; and the believers on earth perpetually called the divine blessings on him.

Wollaston writes:

> "The mission of Islam was inexorable. Jew, Pagan and Christian were alike set aside; the religion of the future was to be the worship of one God."
>
> "There is no god but God, and Muhammad[sa] is His Prophet" had become a factor in the world history. The key of paradise was, to use the prophet's own striking words, "to testify that there is no god but the Lord alone, with Him there is no partner." (1/2 Hour with Mohammed, p.65)

1. "Before him went the pestilence and burning coals went forth at his feet."

In the Arabic translation, instead of "Burning coals" we have "the fever." Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, writes in his commentary:

> "The authorized version has unfortunately rendered all the verbs in this section in the past tense, thus obscuring the sense of the poem. They all refer to a scene really future, but brought by the grasp of Faith, into the immediate present."

He says, about this phrase:

> "Better, before him shall go the plague and burning pestilence shall go forth where he sets his feet."

This happened exactly as foretold. When the Holy Prophet came to Medina, which was weltering under its pestilence, many of his fellow refugees were prostrate with the fever. Sir William Muir writes:

> "On which Mohammed, looking upwards, prayed, O Lord! Make Medina dear unto us, even as Mecca, or even dearer. Bless its produce and banish far from it the pestilence."

In the margin, he adds:

> "So prevalent was the fever that at one time Mahomet was almost the only person at prayers able to stand up." (Life of Mahomet p. 65)

This pestilence was removed from Medina, the burning fever fled away by the prayers of the Holy Prophet[sa], as is also mentioned in Bukhari in the chapter, "Interpretation of Dreams." Abdullah, son of Omar[ra], relates that the Holy Prophet of Islam whilst in Medina saw in a vision that a jet black woman with disordered hair went out in Medina and stood in *Jahfa*, and he interpreted it to mean that the pestilence of Medina had been removed to *Jahfa*. Thus the prediction of Habakkuk was verbally fulfilled in the time of the Holy Prophet of Islam.

1. "Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Thou didst strike through with his stave the head of the villages."[38]

Ellicott says later:

> "Thou dost pierce with his (thine anointed people's) spears the head of his (the enemy's princes) when they came out as a whirlwind to scatter me, their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly."[39]

Christian commentators who try to apply this prophecy to Jesus Christ are disturbed over these two points. They cannot find any satisfactory answers; instead treat them as very obscure clauses. But we find a literal fulfillment of these points in the Holy Prophet[sa].

The last point is the uttermost efforts made by the chieftains of Mecca who went to the Battle of Badr like a whirlwind with the intention of extirpating Islam. The prayer of the Holy Prophet[sa] at this time reflects the true picture of the danger.

Wollaston writes:

> "Mohamed was fully alive to the importance of the struggle upon which he had entered-immediately before the battle, he implored the assistance of the God whose cause he was supporting: O' Lord! I beseech Thee; forget not Thy promise of assistance and of victory. O Lord, if this little band be vanquished, idolatry will prevail and the pure worship of Thee ceases from off the Earth." (1/2 Hour with Mohamed, p. 51)

Now the first clause that "thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked by discovering the foundation unto the neck" is very interesting. The various authors in their commentaries on the Bible write:

> "The obscurity of this verse is diminished if we remember that Pharaoh is being spoken of as (to use our own common phrase) "the head of his house." This head, says the prophet, Jehovah struck entirely away at the disaster of the Red Sea."

I have already quoted above from the Lord Bishop Ellicott's commentary, "that all the verbs in this section refer to a future scene." Therefore it is futile to say that the verse refers to Pharaoh's destruction in the Red Sea. This prophecy had its true fulfillment

when Abu Jahl, the head of the Quraish, received a blow of the scimitar in the thigh which brought him to the ground; his head was later cut off by Abdullah son of Masood[ra].

Dermangham tells us how:

> "Abdullah ben Masood found Abu Jahl in a dying state. He put his foot on his chest already to deal with him the death blow, but the old man asked: 'To whom is the victory?' 'To God and His Prophet.' The dying man lifted himself up painfully, and with a terrible look, a mingling of sadness, rage and pride, he grasped Abdullah's beard and said: 'Little herdsman that you are! You are about to kill me. But you aspire a trifle too high. I am the noblest man that it shall be given you to put to death. And I have already been vanquished by a mere peasant.' Abdullah cut off his head and brought it to the Prophet. 'There is no God but Allah,' said he prostrating himself, 'This man was the Pharaoh of our nation and he has been punished.'" (P.189)

In another tradition quoted in *Al-Siratul Halabiyya,* Abdullah Ibn Masood[ra] said: "When I struck him with my saber, it did not strike well. Then Abu Jahl spat in my face and said: 'Take thou my sword and cut off my head from the foundations of my neck!' And I did so." Edward William Lane, after mentioning the meaning of *Arsh* i.e., a vein in the base of the neck, writes: "and when it is said *Arsh Falan*, it means he struck him in the base of the neck.."

> "It is related in a tradition respecting the slaying of Abu-Jahl, that he said to Ibn Masood[as]: 'Take thou my sword and cut with it my head from my *Arsh* (vein in the base of the neck).'"
>
> (Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon, p.189)

Abu Jahl is in this prophecy named "the head of the wicked as Pharaoh was by his own confession" when he said, "The Lord is

righteous, and I and my people are wicked."[40] And as Pharaoh incited the people to pursue the Israelites when they fled from Egypt, likewise, "Abu Jahl was the person who mounted the roof and sounded the alarm." (Life of Mohamed by Irving. P. 109) In this way the prophecy is connected with Pharaoh, but not the Pharaoh of Moses[as], but the Pharaoh of the Prophet, whom Moses[as] described as one 'like unto him'.

A Prophet after Jesus

Now I come to the time of Jesus Christ. In his time, we find that all the Jews believed in the coming of three prophets. Elias, Messiah and That Prophet.[41] Jesus[as] was the Messiah and he regarded John the Baptist as Elias[as].[41] Then where is that prophet who was to come after the Messiah?

The Rev. Sadler writes:

> "That prophet seems to refer to the one foretold by God in Deut. 18:18. It seems that the Jews did not universally understand this prophecy of the Messiah." (The St. John's Gospel with Notes by Sadler)

We have already examined the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:18. We found that the prophet mentioned in it cannot be the Messiah. It is the Holy Prophet of Islam who was to come after the Messiah. Therefore, did Jesus[as] point out in the parable of the Vineyard that after him "shall come the Lord of Vineyard, and he will destroy those wicked husbandmen, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." "Jesus[as] said unto them: 'Did you never read in the scriptures, the stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord and it is marvelous in our eyes. Therefore, I say unto you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits

thereof. And he that falleth on this stone shall be broken to pieces, but on whosoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."[43]

Moreover, Peter's saying recorded in Acts (3:22) leaves no room for doubt that after Jesus[as] "shall come the prophet like of Moses[as], about whom all the prophets have prophesied". Therefore, undoubtedly, the Holy Prophet of Islam was the prophet foretold, who appeared after Jesus[as], from the descendants of Ishmael[as] about whom it was said: "His hand shall be against every man, and every man's against him".[44] And who was rejected by the builders and cast out into the wilderness in the hope that he should not be heir with Isaac[as];[45] but at last in the person of the Holy Prophet of Islam was made the corner stone of the building of religion and civilization of the world. The wicked husbandmen who dwelt in the outskirts of Medina were miserably punished; the persecutors were deprived of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of earth.

"The Spirit of Truth"

Avoiding the dispute between Muslims and Christians about the word "Comforter" or "Paraclete", I take the verse[45A] in which Jesus[as] says: I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth is come he will guide you to all truth, for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you or declare things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show or declare it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore, said I that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

This "Spirit of Truth" cannot be the Holy Ghost as Christian commentators claim.

Firstly, because the Holy Ghost was in the world in the time of

Jesus[as], John the Baptist[as] witnessed the spirit like a dove descending upon Jesus[as]. He said that Jesus[as] "Shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."[46] Luke tells us about a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, that the Holy Ghost was upon him, and had revealed to him that he would see Christ before his death.[47] But the spirit of truth mentioned in the verse under discussion was to come after Jesus[as].

Secondly, the Holy Ghost did not reveal to the disciple new things which they should not bear in Jesus' lifetime. On the contrary, they gave up the burden of the Law, and made many concessions to the people in the matter of religion, and dropped many restrictions on eating and drinking.

Thirdly, The Holy Ghost did not reveal to them more of the truth than Jesus[as] did.

Fourthly, the disciples spoke themselves and never claimed that God spoke to them.

Fifthly, the disciples did not make prophecies by the revelation of God about the future.

The true fulfillment of this prophecy was the Holy Prophet of Islam.

Firstly, he came after Jesus[as] and brought a perfect comprehensive Law containing the new ordinances and commandments, which Jesus' disciples were not able to bear---such as the ordinances of fighting, and five daily prayers, and a complete code of eating and drinking, and for all social affairs.

Secondly, he was given all the truth, i.e., the Qur'an about which God says: "In the Qur'an are all the right books"[48] i.e., the right teachings, ordinances, directions and all items necessary for the guidance of man, whether they were revealed before or not, are all to be found in the Qur'an.

Thirdly, he did not speak from himself, but what he received from Allah. God says in the Holy Qur'an:

"Nor speaks he of his own inclination. It is but a revelation which is revealed to him."[49]

"And whenever our clear communications are recited to them, those who do not hope of our meeting say: Bring Qur'an other than this, or change it. Say, it does not beseem me to that I should change it of myself; I follow naught but what is revealed to me."[50]

Fourthly, he glorified Jesus[as] by revealing Jesus' true position to the world, and exonerated him and his mother from the stigmas placed on them in the past. He cleared him of being "cursed of God", as the Jews and Christians believed alike, on the ground that he died on the cross. The Qur'an refuses this idea based on surmise and declares that the Jews "did not kill him assuredly, but on the contrary, he died his natural death, and God exalted him in his presence."[51]

Fifthly, he foretold by the revelation of God about the future so abundantly, that it is useless to attempt to find his parallel among the other prophets. There are, for instance, prophecies in the Qur'an and traditions in respect of our own time. These have been fulfilled precisely. If God please, I will give an account of them on some other occasion.

In short, the true object of this prophecy is none other than the Holy Prophet of Islam.

Prophecies applied to Jesus[as]

Before I conclude my subject, I like to mention three prophecies applied to Jesus[as] from Matthew's Gospel:

Matthew says:

> "Joseph (with Mary[as] and Jesus[as]) lived in Egypt until the Death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophets, saying: 'Out of Egypt have I called my Son.'"[52]

The real words of the prophet in the Old Testament are: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."[53]

Now it is clear as sun from the original words of the prophets that they refer to the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, about whom God said, "Israel is my son, even my first-born"[54]

1. When Herod slew all the children of Bethlehem, from two years old and under, then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah[as] the prophet, saying: "In Rama was there a voice heard lamenting and weeping, and great mourning: Rachel weeping for children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."[55] But in the Old Testament Jeremiah[as] the prophet continues: "Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again from the land of the enemy, and there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their border."[56]

   These are the words. Evidently the prophet speaks these words to the children of Israel as they are carried away into captivity into Babylon. The prophet forecasts that they will be released and will come back to their own homes.

2. Joseph came back with Jesus[as] and Mary[as] from Egypt and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled,

which was spoken by the prophets; he shall be called Nazarene.[57] But these words are not to be found in any prophet's books.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I'd like to say that these prophecies about the coming of the Holy Prophet of Islam, clearer than those about Jesus[as], were one of the many reasons which led unprejudiced Christians to accept Islam. They knew that the rejection of a prophet who appears in accordance with prophecies is, as Jesus[as] said, the rejection of the prophets who prophesied about him. After learning the truth of the Holy Prophet of Islam, they feared not the opposition of their relatives and countrymen and boldly became Muslims declaring: "There is none worthy of worship bedsides Allah, and Muhammad[sa] is His Messenger."

They were convinced of Islam through a sword. Not a sword of steel, though, but the unbreakable sword of reason and argument. By the same sword, Christians of this age will accept Islam, and the One, True God will be worshipped in the whole world. Amen

References

1. John 5:46-47
2. Holy Qur'an 2:102
3. Holy Qur'an 7:158
4. Holy Qur'an 16:10
5. Holy Qur'an 17:10-11
6. Holy Qur'an 17:20
7. Holy Qur'an 17:25
8. Holy Qur'an 21:13
9. Genesis 21:18
10. Genesis 17:14
11. Genesis 17:21
12. Mathew 21:43
13. Genesis 16:12
14. Holy Qur'an 2:130
15. Holy Qur'an 25:45
16. Deuteronomy 18:18-10
17. John 16:12
18. Acts 3:20
19. Acts 3:22
20. Holy Qur'an 73:16
21. Holy Qur'an 53:3-4
22. Holy Qur'an 5:4
23. Tirmadhi Book 44, Hadith 3087
24. Holy Qur'an 96:2
25. Holy Qur'an 9:14
26. Holy Qur'an 5:68

26. A Holy Qur'an 69:45-46
27. Deuteronomy 33:2
28. Genesis 21.20
29. Solomon 5:10 & 16
30. Psalms 45
31. John 7:1-10
32. Mathew 16:20
33. Holy Qur'an 34:30-31
34. not used
35. Isaiah 42:10-17
36. Habakkuk 3:3
37. Habakkuk 3:7
38. Habakkuk 3:13-14
39. Habakkuk 3:13-14
40. Exodus 9:27
41. John 1:21
42. Mathew 11:14
43. Mathew 21:40-41
44. Genesis 16:12
45. Genesis 21:10

45A. John 16:12-14

46. Mark 1:8:10
47. Luke 2:26
48. Holy Qur'an 98:3
49. Holy Qur'an 53:3-4
50. Holy Qur'an 10:16
51. Holy Qur'an 4:158
52. Mathew 2:15
53. Hosea 11:1
54. Exodus 4:22
55. Mathew 2:17-19
56. Jeremiah 31:16-17
57. Mathew 2:23

6: Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] as a Worshipper of God

Worship in pre-Islamic Faiths

On careful examination, we see that worship and prayer are key components of all pre-Islamic religions. Indeed, without worship and prayer, faith means nothing. Yet, it seems there are too few traditions in recorded history describing the ways of worship of the prophets from the time of Adam[as] through the time of Jesus[as]. There are no details of how the prophets worshipped. How did they prepare themselves for prayer, how many times a day did they pray and in what words did they supplicate on a regular basis?

Early followers of pre-Islamic faiths did not place enough importance to the form and substance of worship. Therefore, the followers of these prophets cannot seem to find the crucial significance of the *form* of worship today. When a prophet cannot be relied upon as an example of prayer or worship, then it is left up to his followers to decide how to go about it. Obviously, the early followers of these religions never found their prophets' ways of worshipping to be vital to their faith. If it were important enough to the followers of these prophets, the practice of their prophets would have been recorded in detail.

Worship in Islam

Unlike other religions, Islam provides a complete description of worship and prayer; which is derived from the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. His methods of worship are detailed clearly in documented history. This model of prayer was and is vital to the followers of Islam. By his example, Muslims know exactly when and how to pray to God.

Prophet Muhammad's[sa] habit of praying began well before his first revelation from God, before his call to Prophethood in the Cave of Hira. Even before the angel Gabriel came to him, he would regularly

visit the small cave outside of his town to meditate and pray. From this cave, the *Ka'aba* was visible to him, and his attention was drawn to God, yet God's attributes had not yet been revealed to him. He was inclined to worship even before his God was defined to him.

In Islam, through the example of the Holy Prophet[sa], the form and substance for worship are clearly defined and followed. The followers of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] know exactly how many prayers to recite and how to recite them, know when and how to hold fasts, how to perform the sacred pilgrimage to Mecca, and so on. It is his precise example that we as Muslims can follow exactly in worshipping Allah. The Holy Prophet[sa] ensured that, by acknowledging in the *Kalima* (Creed) that he is a human being and a worshipper like us, he would not be worshipped as some prophets of earlier religions, who were deified.

Prayer was so important to the Holy Prophet[sa] that there never seemed to be a moment where he was not found worshipping God. He worshipped during the day and most of the night as he was commanded. Huzaifah[ra] and Abu Dharr[ra] relate that the Holy Prophet[sa] supplicated on retiring at night: "With Thy name, O Allah, I expire and return to life;" and supplicated on waking: "All praise belongs to Allah Who has brought me back to life after He had caused me to die, to Him is the return."[1] While most people were sound asleep at night, the Holy Prophet[sa] spent his nights praying. His wife, Hazrat Ayesha[ra], relates: "One night, I missed the Holy Prophet[sa] from his bed so I cast about and discovered that he was in bowing, in prostration and was reciting, 'Holy art Thou and Thine is the Praise and there is none worthy of worship save Thee'."[1A]

Salat (Formal Prayer)

The first form of the Holy Prophet's[sa] worship, *salat* or formal prayer, changed the world. No one could have imagined it then,

but now the entire world bears witness that the form he used for prayer was a global way of gesturing humility and humbleness. For example, in *salat*, when we stand with our hands folded, it is a reflection of people in the Western hemisphere, who fold their hands in front of themselves as a sign of respect to others. In certain South American cultures and some Asian cultures, touching one's ears is a sign of asking forgiveness, as Muslims do in *salat*. East Asians show their respect to others by bowing, as Muslims bow to Allah in their worship to Him. The way in which Muslims prostrate to God, is emulated by cultures in the Middle East and India to show humbleness and humility. The form of Islamic prayer has been clearly defined and ultimately, designed to encompass all people of the entire world.

Surah Fatiha (the opening chapter) of the Qur'an is its essence and was prescribed by the Holy Prophet[sa] to all his followers as a requisite part of *salat*. No prayer is complete unless *Surah Fatiha* is recited.

The Holy Prophet[sa] emphasized the blessings of congregational prayers, but in an effort to alleviate any undue burden, kept them short. When leading congregational prayers, he would recite a short chapter after *Surah Fatihah*, and instructed other imams to do the same. In his own prayers at home, however, he would often recite two or three longer *surahs* in just one *raka'a*.

Even in battles, he worshipped, offered his prayers, and remembered Allah in different ways. He set up a system whereby one group of Muslims could offer their prayers while another group sat on watch for enemy attacks. Once the first group concluded their prayers, these groups would trade places so that the latter could have their prayer time. One time during the Battle of *Khaybir*, the enemy attacked at the time of the *Asr* (afternoon) prayer. The attack was so vicious that it was impossible to take even one moment for *salat*. As

the sun set, *Asr* time came to an end. The Holy Prophet[sa] felt awful about missing his prayer time. As soon as the attack was over, the very first thing he did was to offer the *Asr* prayer in congregation.

Hazrat Huzaifah[ra] relates that one night he had the opportunity of offering *salat* alongside the Holy Founder of Islam[sa]. Prophet Muhammad[sa] started reciting *Surah Baqarah*, which is the longest chapter in the Holy Qur'an. Hazrat Huzaifah[ra] assumed that he would recite only 100 [of the 287] verses, but he continued past that mark. He then expected the Holy Prophet[sa] would finish the entire *Surah*, which he did. However, upon reciting the entire *Surah*, he continued on with the next *surah*, *Al-Imran*, and after that, he completed reciting *Surah Al-Nisa*. These three *surahs* alone make up more than 5 parts of the Holy Qur'an, which has 30 parts in all. Furthermore, as much time as he took to recite all 3 *surahs*, he spent equal amounts of time in *Ruku* (bowing) and *Sajda* (prostration). Hence, the Holy Prophet[sa], when not offering *salat* in congregation, chose to recite as many *surahs* - no matter how long they were - as he wished.[2]

While Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] stressed the importance of formal prayer, he also established the importance of moderation in worship. Hazrat Anas[ra] relates that three persons inquired from the wives of the Holy Prophet[sa] about his practice in the matter of worship. When they were informed, they felt that amount of time spent worshipping would not suffice in their own cases, saying, "There is no comparison between the Holy Prophet[sa] and us. He has been forgiven in advance." (They meant that they would need to worship more than the Holy Prophet[sa].) One of them declared, "I shall always spend the whole night in voluntary prayer." The second announced, "I shall observe a fast every day without interruption." The third said, "I shall keep away from women and shall never marry." The Holy Prophet[sa] arrived and asked them, "Did you say this and this? Now, I fear God more than you do and am more

mindful of my duty to Him than you are, but I observe a fast and also abstain from fasting, and I perform voluntary prayer at night and also sleep, and I consort with my wives. He who turns away from my practice is not of me."[3] The Holy Prophet[sa] was saying that even though he spent an ample amount of time in worship and prayer, he did not spend every waking moment praying. Although there were days that he would fast, there were also days when he did not keep a fast. There were parts of nights that he prayed and others when he slept. He pointed out to his followers the need to observe his teachings in moderation and not to completely abandon living life for religion. It is noteworthy that in spite of the fact that he performed much worship, whenever he prayed, he always praised Allah and asked for forgiveness. Hazrat Ayesha[ra] relates that in his bowing and prostration, the Holy Prophet[sa] recited repeatedly, "Holy art Thou, O' Allah our Lord, and Thine is the Praise. Forgive me, O Allah."[4]

Saum (Fasting)

Another method of worship that the Holy Prophet[sa] practiced was fasting. During the holy month of Ramadhan, Holy Prophet[sa] adhered to fasting the entire month and devoted his time to prayer. Hazrat Ayesha[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] never offered more than eleven *raka'as* at night during Ramadhan or at any other time. He would offer four *raka'as* long and perfect, and then four of the same type and then three. She asked him, "Messenger of Allah, do you sleep before offering *Witr* [a voluntary prayer]?" He answered, "Ayesha, my eyes sleep but my heart does not."[5] What the Holy Prophet[sa] was trying to say was that even though his eyes were closed, his heart was still worshipping. Take, for example, when something is bothering us, during our sleep, our subconscious is continuously thinking of that problem. Even during sleep, our mind is focused on this problem. The Holy Prophet[sa] said that even though his eyes were closed, his mind, heart and soul were

continuously worshipping Allah.

Ramadhan was not the only time of the year that he would fast. He would fast throughout the year for a different number of days. Yet, he never fasted for an entire month unless it was during Ramadhan. Hazrat Ayesha[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] would not fast during a month till we began to think he would not fast in this month, and he would go on observing the fast till we thought he would not omit fasting at all during the month; and if one wanted to see him offering prayer at night one could do that; or if one wanted to see him at sleep at night one could do that as well.[6]

There is a long spectrum regarding fasting amongst the pre-Islamic religions. Some religions feel that just refraining from meat on a particular day is considered fasting, while others, such as Hindu gurus and monks of different faiths, fast for long periods of times. The Holy Prophet's[sa] method of fasting established the middle ground from previous religions. He never allowed 24-hour fasting, as do certain other religions. He required people to wake up and eat breakfast and to break the fast at the prescribed times. Once again, when he stressed the importance of moderation in worship, it was reflected in fasting as well.

Zakat (Almsgiving)

The third form of worship is *Zakat,* or almsgiving, in the way of God, which was prescribed by the Holy Prophet[sa]. He established a prescribed method of *Zakat*. By stating exactly how much and how to give, Muslims know the correct way of worshipping in the form of charity. However, there is no record of him ever paying Zakat. From this information, some have inferred that the prophets of God are not obligated to pay *Zakat*. The fact is, however, that *Zakat* is required only on the property that a person keeps for more than a year. But anything that came into the possession of the Holy

Prophet[sa] never remained in his hands for long. He always gave it away to the needy, therefore, not obligating him to pay *Zakat*.

One of the meanings of *Zakat* relates to *Sadqa*, or charity. In that respect, the Holy Prophet[sa] was unique in a sense that he gave away everything that was given to him and even accelerated his giving in the month of Ramadhan. He was very conscious that no money or wealth should be kept in his house. On one occasion, extraordinary money came to him from one of the battles. Distribution of the whole sum could not take place by that evening. So that night, Prophet Muhammad[sa] stayed in the mosque and did not enter his house until Hazrat Bilal[ra] came and told him that the work was complete and all monies had been distributed.

His desire to give charity to the needy, widows, and orphans is well recorded and cherished by Muslims. One day there was goat meat that was to be distributed. Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had left home and later returned. He asked Hazrat Ayesha[ra], "How did the distribution of the meat go?" She replied by saying, "Nothing could be saved except for one leg." The Holy Prophet[sa] said, "No, Ayesha, you should have said 'all of it was saved except one leg'."[7] He was trying to show that the meat that was given away to the needy was actually the part that was 'saved'. It was that distributed meat that would be his and Ayesha's reward with Allah. The leg that was left for them to eat would not reward them. It would be consumed in this world and would not be saved.

Hajj (Pilgrimage)

Pilgrimage to Mecca was another form of worship that was established by the Holy Prophet[sa]. There was no record of how many times he performed Hajj prior to the advent of Islam. It is recorded in history that the Tribe of *Quraish* in Mecca used to perform *Hajj* every year. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Holy Prophet[sa]

also performed *Hajj* once a year, but the exact number is not known.

During his thirteen-year stay in Mecca after the call, he performed two pilgrimages. He also performed *Hajj* during his tenth year in Medina. It is also confirmed that he performed *Umra* (voluntary, *Hajj*-like pilgrimage performed outside the prescribed calendar dates for *Hajj*) four times during the time he lived in Medina. He showed everyone precisely how to perform the circuit and what prayers to recite. This is the example and model that pious Muslims follow to this day.

One extremely significant role of *Hajj* is its display of citizens from all nations worshipping together in one place. People of all different backgrounds, color, and nationalities come together for one purpose and are all equal in the sight of God.

Remembrance of God

The last form of worship is the remembrance of God as practiced by the Holy Prophet[sa]. Hazrat Ayesha[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] remembered Allah every moment of his life. There was never a moment where he would not pray to Allah. He was the personified example of the Qur'anic verse:

"My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds".[8]

Every aspect of his life was focused on God. There are literally countless incidents of the Holy Prophet[sa] remembering God. He prayed at the time of eating, going to sleep, waking up, riding on a horse, entering a house, putting on new clothes, entering and leaving the mosque, looking in the mirror, and so on. The times are countless. Even while traveling he was known to pray. Hazrat Anas[ra] relates: We returned from a journey with the Holy Prophet[sa] and when Medina came into view he began to repeat, "We are

returning safe, turning to our Lord, worshipping Him and praising Him"; and he kept it up till we entered the town.[9] He was also known to worship before going to sleep. His wife, Hazrat Ayesha[ra], relates that when the Holy Prophet[sa] came to bed, he would cup his hands and blow upon his palms and recite the last two chapters of the Holy Qur'an and then pass his hands over his body.[10] Talha ibn Ubaidullah[ra] relates that, on seeing a new moon, the Holy Prophet[sa] would supplicate, "Allah, do Thou cause the appearance of this moon to be a harbinger of peace, faith, security and Islam for us. Thy Lord, O' moon, and my Lord is Allah. May this be a moon presaging guidance and good."[11]

On every Friday and every *Eid* celebration, the very last sentence of the Prophet's[sa] sermon was about the remembrance of Allah. The final portion of the Friday sermon, which is recited in Arabic just prior to the *Jumah Salat* (Friday prayer), are the words:

> "Remember Allah so that He will remember you and pray to Him and He will accept your prayers and remembrance of Allah is the greatest virtue."

This is how he finished his sermons every Friday and on *Eid*, which are the occasions of gathering of the largest groups of Muslims in a city or a particular neighborhood. It was of great importance to him, and he continuously implanted this in the minds of every Muslim.

Establishment of Worship

In addition to being a perfect model, Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] greatest accomplishment was the establishment of continuous worship of God throughout the world. To underscore how profound this accomplishment is, let us reflect on one single day on earth: The time that a Muslim rises for *Fajr* prayer in New York is between

five and six o'clock in the morning. While the Muslims in New York are still offering their *Fajr* prayer, the time for *Fajr* has come in Chicago and Muslims there are waking to offer their prayers. Next, Muslims in Arizona will rise for *Fajr* prayers while people in the Midwest are concluding their prayers. Once again, while they are still praying, Muslims on the West Coast are beginning their prayers. This obviously continues through Hawaii, Japan, and further west. When the time for *Zuhr* prayer (noon time) arrives, the same process starts all over again. So for 24 hours a day, there are human beings always offering prayers to God somewhere in the world. No other prophet or religion accomplished this. Other religions, whether they have weekly or even daily services, cannot achieve the 24-7 worship of God around the world. Furthermore, this is only the *required salat* and does not consider the voluntary prayer that Muslims offer.

Another way to look at this is on a worldwide scale. At any one moment, at various places in the world, it is time for one of the five daily *salats*. So the five daily, formal prayers are being offered in the world without any break whatsoever.

According to the instructions of the Holy Prophet[sa], prayers are taught to Muslim children between the ages of 7 and 10. He established among his followers that children aged 7 should learn prayers. By the age of 10, they should be obliged to recite their prayers every day. This reflects the importance of worship for his followers. That is why it begins in the early years of life and not in adulthood.

The primary substance of these prayers is also prescribed by the Holy Prophet[sa], in addition to whatever a person wants to pray for. In formal prayer, all Muslims first recite the same words in Arabic, after which, they are allowed to ask for whatever personal guidance they need. Prescribed prayers are the ones that appeal to Allah and

that is why He taught them. A Muslim is following a perfect script as taught and practiced by the Holy Prophet[sa], but can also offer any other prayers that personally appeal to him or her.

The example of the Holy Prophet[sa] praying all night until his feet became swollen, praying while traveling, and taking part in expeditions, sends a forceful message to his followers regarding the worship of God. There should never be a moment where a Muslim forgets God. Not just through prayer, but through our actions as well. Worship is also prescribed in other forms, such as almsgiving, pilgrimage, and fasting. Remembrance of Allah is vital to being a true Muslim.

In the eyes of Muslims, there can be no human being more perfect than the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] but his humbleness and humility are noteworthy. He always seemed to be asking for forgiveness for himself. Aghirr Muzani[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] said, "Sometimes I perceive a veil over my heart and I supplicate Allah for forgiveness a hundred times in a day."[12] It is amazing that a man as flawless as the Holy Prophet[sa] could keep asking for forgiveness and be constantly praying and worshipping Allah, while most Muslims need to be consistently reminded to pray. In fact, the Holy Prophet[sa] prayed so much, that it could not even be recorded how often or how much he prayed. Abu Umamah[ra] relates the Holy Prophet[sa] made many supplications which we were not able to retain in our memories. So we said to him, "Messenger of Allah, you make many supplications of which we do not remember any." He said, "Shall I tell you something which shall comprehend all of them? Supplicate in these words: 'Allah, I beg of Thee of good all that Thy Prophet Muhammad[sa] begged of Thee and seek Thy Protection against all the evil against which Thy Prophet Muhammad[sa] sought Thy protection. Thou art the One who is asked for help and it is for Thee to convey the guidance. There is no strength to resist evil, nor power to do good, except through Allah'."[13]

The Promised Messiah[as], the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, has summed up beautifully the result of the worship, prayers and supplications of the Holy Prophet[sa]. In his opinion, whatever happened in the beginning of Islam was the result of the supplications of the Holy Prophet[sa], which he had submitted to God Almighty with his tears in the streets of Mecca. All the grand victories which changed the entire aspect of the world were the result of his prayers.

The Promised Messiah[as] writes:

> "Have you any notion what was the strange event that occurred in the desert country of Arabia when hundreds of thousands of the dead were revived within a brief period and those who had been misguided through generations put on divine color, and those who were blind obtained sight, and those who had been dumb began to speak of the understanding of the Divine, and the world underwent a revolution which had never been seen or heard of before? It was the supplications during dark nights of one who had lost himself in God which raised a clamor in the world, and manifested such wonders as appeared impossible in the case of that unlearned helpless one. Send down Thy blessings and peace, O' Allah, on him and his people according to the number of his grieving and sorrows for his followers and pour down upon him the lights of Thy mercy forever."[14]

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was a great model of worship for his followers. He praised God so much, and it is a mark of the excellence of his worship that Allah responded to him with such kindness, the like with which He had not done in the past. God Himself declared:

> "Allah sends down blessings on the Prophet, and His angels

invoke blessings on him. O' ye who believe, so you also invoke blessings on him and salute him with the salutation of peace."[15]

Under this commandment, all over the world at every hour of the day, there are believers who join Allah and His angels in sending the salutations and blessings on this Prophet[sa].

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7: The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and Human Rights

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was 40 years of age when the angel Gabriel came to him in the cave of *Hira* and asked him: "Recite!" The Holy Prophet answered, "I am not a reciter", where upon as he himself related, "the angel took me and whelmed me in his embrace until he had reached the limit of my endurance, then he released me and said, "Recite!". I said again that I am not a reciter and again he took me and whelmed me in his embrace and again when he had reached the limit of my endurance, he released me and said, "Recite!" and again I said that I am not a reciter. Then a third time, he whelmed me as before, then released me and said, "Recite in the name of thy Lord Who createth man from a clot of blood, recite and thy Lord is the most bountiful, He Who hath taught by the pen, taught man what he knew not!" He recited these words after the angel who thereupon left him. So he fled from the cave and when he was half way down the slope of the mountain, he heard a voice above him saying, O' Muhammad, thou art the Messenger of God, and I am Gabriel." He raised his eyes heavenwards and there was his visitant. Still recognizable, but now clearly, an angel filling the whole horizon. The Holy Prophet[sa] descended the slope and went to his house.

"Cover me, cover me," he said to his wife Khadija[ra], as with still quivering heart, he laid himself on his couch. Alarmed, yet not daring to question him, she quickly brought a cloak and spread it over him. When the intensity of his awe subsided, he told her what he had seen and heard. Hazrat Khadija's answer was, "Do not worry. It is not possible that you will be unsuccessful because you are a kind-hearted person, you treat your relations in the best manner, you help the needy, you establish the morals and knowledge which have disappeared from the world, you honor your guest and if anyone is in trouble you are always there to help him."[1]

In the comments of Hazrat Khadija[ra], we find five basic points about the character of the Holy Prophet[sa] which are the foundation

of human rights. It was an observation during the 16 years of her marriage and it was such a spontaneous response that there was no doubt that these qualities existed in the Holy Prophet[sa]. It was the reflection of that light which the Holy Qur'an has mentioned in *Surah Noor* that the Holy Prophet[sa] was *Noor* (light) even before he was given the gift of prophethood. When the prophethood came, the *noor* became *noorun-ala-noor* or light upon light. Let us examine the qualities of the Holy Prophet[sa] as related by Hazrat Khadija[ra].

First of all she mentioned that he was a kind-hearted person. It should be noted that the attribute of kind-heartedness pertains to family members, tribes, nations, fellow citizens etc. Everyone within these categories must be treated with kindness. There are many people who will not be kind to their relations but are very nice and courteous to the strangers. Certain races may be courteous and cordial to only certain races and discriminate against others. For example, some white Americans may be very friendly with other Whites but as soon as they have to get together or associate themselves with African-Americans, their whole character changes to disgust, and kindness has no part in it. The Holy Prophet[sa]'s kind heartedness was for everyone. He was kind to his family members, his relatives, friends, countrymen, his tribesmen and he would treat them according to their status and this is the basis of establishing peace in the world among diverse races, religions and countries.

The best example of the unlimited kindness was reflected at the time of the victory of Mecca when he forgave everyone. But, here is an instance to show how kind he was even to the criminal enemies.

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] came to Medina and a tribe attacked and took camels belonging to the Holy Prophet[sa] and ran away. The shepherd who was watching over the camels came to the Holy Prophet[sa] and told him that some tribal men came and ran away with the camels. A companion of the Holy Prophet named

Akwah[ra] was the only one present at that time and the thieves were considered to be in large numbers. Akwah[ra] called around to see if anyone was nearby to help him chase the thieves. But no one answered and he decided to chase them by himself. Akwah[ra] was excellent in using the bow and arrow. He was hiding in the trees and throwing arrows at the thieves and they were getting injured one at a time. He chased them along hiding in the trees for miles and kept on injuring them until they could not maintain control of the camels while attending to their wounds. Akwah[ra] then took all the camels and brought them back to the Holy Prophet[sa]. He stated: O' Prophet of Allah, the thieves were real thirsty and as they would try to milk the camel, I would throw arrows at them. They are thirsty and wounded and therefore cannot run either. They are right now about ten miles from here. Let us send some men there to arrest them. Holy Prophet[sa] answered: You got your property back, why do you want to hurt the poor men? Let them go. There is no need to chase them.[2]

The second attribute that Hazrat Khadija[ra] mentioned was the exemplary treatment of guests. There is one kind of entertainment that people do which is of reciprocal nature. We entertain some guests because we know that we will be entertained in return by them in future. The better kind of entertaining and serving the guests is when we have no hope or chance to get reciprocal treatment. For example, we receive a guest from Australia and we have no plans or foreseeable opportunity to visit Australia but we go ahead and entertain the guest in the best manner possible. This is the real attribute of hosting a guest. The key factor is that we honor and serve our guests whoever they happen to be, again without discrimination. The Holy Prophet[sa] set the example that no matter what nationality, religion or tribe a guest was from; his treatment of the guest was consistent.

The third quality mentioned was that the Holy Prophet[sa] helped

the needy. It pertains to the people who are handicapped, orphans, widows etc. Hazrat Khadija was asserting that the Holy Prophet[sa] not only took care of his own responsibilities but of all others who could not take care of themselves. This quality is essential for any nation to progress and establish the best form of human rights.

The fourth quality mentioned by Hazrat Khadija[ra] is that when someone is in trouble, Holy Prophet[sa] was there to help him. This is a different category of people than mentioned already. There is always a group of people who are not handicapped, orphans or widows but due to limited income or resources get in bad times in different parts of their lives. This is an area that most nations, governments and individuals overlook. A lot of people feel sympathy for a blind person or someone without a leg and look forward to helping them financially and otherwise. However, if a person due to limitations of formal education or experience cannot earn to raise the family, majority of the people either do not care or don't go out of their way to help them.

Please note that we are referring to the people with legitimate requirements of help and assistance, not individuals who due to their laziness would not be productive. Holy Prophet[sa] through his keen vision always kept knowledge of the group of people mentioned here and helped them in their needs.

The fifth attribute that Hazrat Khadija[ra] stated was that the Holy Prophet[sa] has established knowledge and morals which had disappeared from the world. This quality encompasses everything needed to guarantee the human rights. Through excellent morals, the general populations become righteous and the human rights get preserved.

This is an amazing incidence where the response of Hazrat Khadija[ra] was so immediate and precise that it described the absolute

reflection of the forty years of the Holy Prophet[sa]'s life. Now let us examine how the human rights were protected and improved as the light of prophethood started shining and added the eternal light to the shining nature of the Holy Prophet[sa].

In 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the universal declaration of human rights. It is interesting to note that almost all the articles of this declaration were already declared, publicized and practiced by the Holy Prophet of Islam 1400 years before the United Nations wrote them, voted on them but have not had the opportunity to enforce their practice anywhere in the world. I would only present a few articles which are very basic and examine how the Holy Prophet's teachings and practice had already established them.

Articles 1 of the declaration of human rights states:

> "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

Article 2 sort of expands on the first one and states:

> "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedom set forth in this declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
>
> Furthermore no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international; status of the country, territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other unitations of sovereignty."

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] declared to the world through the Holy Qur'an on this issue in the following verses:

> "O mankind, worship your Lord Who created you and those who were before you, that you may become righteous, Who made the earth a bed for you and the heaven a roof, and caused water to come down from the clouds and therewith brought forth fruits for your sustenance."[3]
>
> "O mankind, be mindful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from the same created its mate, and from them twain caused to be spread large number of men and women, and be mindful of your duty to Allah, in Whose name you appeal to one another, and be mindful of the ties of kinship."[4]

So far as is apparent, the equality of mankind is assured in Islam as is in Article 1 of the declaration of human rights. The declaration did spell out that a person should not be given a status or privilege for belonging to a particular religion, national origin, sex or language. However, it did not establish on what basis the privileges could be extended. The Holy Qur'an, on the other hand, established that part as well.

The Holy Qur'an declared: "O' mankind, We have created you from male and female, and we have made you into tribes and sub-tribes for greater facility of inter-exchange. Verily, the most honored from among you in the sight of Allah is he who is most righteous among you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware."[5]

The spirit of brotherhood is emphasized at every turn in Islam and permeates every section of Muslim society. It is the practical expression of the truth that all men are creatures and servants of the same Beneficent Creator and must for His sake, and for the purpose of wining His pleasure, live together as brethren.

The Holy Prophet of Islam declared and kept on reminding as in the following *hadith*: "You are brothers, one to another, so let

no one transgress against another, nor leave another to endure transgression unaided. Remember that he who occupies himself in assisting his brother will find Allah coming to his own assistance, and he who strives to relieve his brother of anxiety will find himself shielded against anxiety by Allah on the Day of Judgment, and he who overlooks his brother's fault will find his own faults overlooked by Allah."[6]

Holy Prophet[sa] has been reported to state: "None of you can be a believer unless he should desire for his brother what he desires for himself."[7]

It is one thing to declare and announce and yet altogether a different thing to implement it. History tells us that in 1948, when the declaration of human rights was being signed by the members of the United Nations, the signing countries knew fully well that they were in violations of it while signing it and had no intention of changing their ways. On the other hand we find that the Holy Prophet[sa]'s declarations were in full accordance with his practice.

The day Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was married, he established the practice of the first article of human rights declaration by freeing all the slaves owned previously by his wife Hazrat Khadija[ra]. Slavery was not to be allowed and to be practiced by him at his household before it could be preached to anyone else. Not only the principle of men being equal was established but in the same action kindness was reflected to its fullest extent. One of the slaves refused to go with his relatives. He wanted to stay with the Holy Prophet[sa]. Zaid[ra] had experienced the light and he would rather be a slave of the master Muhammad[sa] than be free with his natural father and mother. The response of the love shown by Zaid[ra] was returned by the greatest kindness that could be hoped for by a slave at that time in Arabia. The Holy Prophet[sa] declared this freed slave to be his adopted son. It was a real loving relationship. During the

time of the second Khalifa, Omar[ra], his son Abdullah[ra] asked him why he had rated Usamah[ra] son of Zaid[ra] higher than Abdullah[ra] in a particular case while Abdullah[ra] son of Omar[ra] had served Islam much more than Usama[ra] had. Hazrat Omar's reply was: "For the reason, son, that Usama's father and Usama were dearer to the Prophet[sa] than thy father and thee."[8]

This was the beginning of abolishing slavery and proved in a practical sense that all men are created equal. It was like a domino effect that every day slaves were being freed by the masters who would accept Islam. Well to do Muslims would buy slaves from cruel masters and free them only and only to win the pleasure of God. This was the training provided by our kind Prophet Muhammad[sa].

A little bit later we find that another slave named Bilal[ra] was continuously being beaten by his master Umayya for the only crime that he accepted Islam. He was being dragged in the hot sands in Arabia with stones and weights put on his body so he could not move. Finally, on the direction of the Holy Prophet[sa], Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] went to Umayya while he was beating up Bilal[ra] and offered to purchase him for whatever price he wanted. Umayya sold him saying that he had no use for him anyway. Bilal[ra] was freed and a few years later the world witnessed the account of Bilal[ra] when the Holy Prophet established that not only all men are created equal but through righteousness even Bilal[ra] could reach the heights of spiritualism and achieve the right of privileges only assigned to the righteous.

On the day of the victory of Mecca, Muslims were marching towards Mecca in the leadership of the Holy Prophet[sa]. It was that day when the declaration was made that anyone under the flag of Bilal[ra] will be guaranteed his life. Just imagine and try to comprehend the position of Bilal[ra]. The slave who was a useless thing to them, could be bought and sold anytime in the market place, was handed over

many times to the youth of Mecca to be beaten and dragged in the streets. The same Meccans were running to go under his flag to have their lives saved and their protection was guaranteed. What the Holy Prophet[sa] had taught and preached was being practiced to its fullest meaning of the text.

Other than the discrimination based on race, we find that even in the modern Western countries, there is an abundance of discrimination based on sex as well. However, even in this category, the Holy Prophet[sa] has set up excellent teachings and practice. It should be noted that at the time of the Holy Prophet[sa], a woman was placed in a condition in which she could not be the owner of her property. Her husband was regarded as the owner of her property. She did not have a share in the property of her father either, nor could she inherit the property of her husband. When married, she was either assigned to her husband for good as his possession, or in the alternative, right was given to the husband to divorce her but not given to her to separate herself from the husband.

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] changed all that. First of all he declared that God had particularly entrusted to him the task of safeguarding the rights of women. He proclaimed in the name of God that man and woman by virtue of their humanity were the equal of each other, and when they lived together, just as man had certain rights over the woman, so had woman certain rights over the man. Women could own property in the same way as men. A husband had no right to use the property of his wife as long as the wife, of her own free will, would let him have some of it. She was to inherit the property of her parents just as well as her brothers. She was also given the right to get a legal separation from her husband if she could not bear to live with him for whatever reasons. Women, in short, were to have an independent status. All the spiritual rewards were to be open to her. She was to command the highest excellences of life. She could take part in different departments of civil administration. In this regard

she was to have the same consideration paid to her claims as that accorded to man.

Holy Prophet[sa] stated that women should be treated with tenderness because she was created from the ribs. It is an excellent example and description how women should be treated. The meaning of being created from the rib is not of course in a literal sense as some Christians take it. The similitude of the rib is that just as the ribs cover the heart but seem to be visible as a separate unit, in the same way the woman has her whole focus toward the man but has an independent existence. The woman should be treated with tenderness because if you try to pressure her or be harsh with her, just as the rib, she will break. In all relations in the world, husband-wife relation is the only one that is so close and yet it can be broken. A relation of brothers, father and son, mother and daughter can never be broken no matter how bad the relationship gets. On the other hand, a husband and wife can be respectful and loving to each other so that their relationship can be stronger than any other relations and yet it can be broken. Just as the rib, woman is part of the body, but has its own existence. The Holy Prophet[sa] established the tenderness for women in his time when the whole culture whether in Arabia or outside would not allow any such thing.

Once, the Holy Prophet[sa] was coming back from the Battle of Khayber and his wife Hazrat Safiyya[ra] was riding the camel along with him. Something happened and the camel got scared and in that process the Holy Prophet[sa] and his wife fell down from the camel. Hazrat Abu Talha[ra] Ansari's camel was right behind, he jumped off his camel and ran to the Prophet[sa] to help him get up and ask if he was hurt. As soon as Abu Talha[ra] reached near the Holy Prophet[sa], he said: Go to the lady first, go to the lady first. It should be noted that the companions were in such love for the Holy Prophet[sa] that the thought of seeing him hurt was unbearable for them. They could care less if anyone else was hurt while their

Prophet was falling down. The Holy Prophet[sa] knew the feelings of the companions and made the point that he knew how much they cared for him and loved him but he instructed to find out first if the lady was hurt, and not to worry about him. This was the training that the Holy Prophet[sa] provided to the companions to establish the fine treatment of women taught by the Holy Qur'an.

In discussing the human rights violations, in addition to the discrimination based on race and sex, there is the ever present discrimination based on religion. It has been over 70 years since the declaration of human rights was signed by all nations of the globe but the violations of the human rights based on religion still exist and in some countries are on the rise. Especially in Muslim countries the rise in human rights violations can be directly attributed to them not following the wonderful examples of the Holy Prophet[sa].

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]'s example in this regard was unparalleled to followers of any other religion. The respect and love that he showed to the followers of other religions is outstanding. When a group of Christians from Nijran visited the Holy Prophet[sa] in Medina and the time came for their prayer services, they asked to be excused so they could leave the mosque and perform their services. The Holy Prophet[sa] insisted that they perform their services in the mosque because it has been constructed for the worship of God.

During the Gulf war, in Chicago Tribune, there was an editorial about how amazing it was that in Saudi Arabia, since the American troops have been allowed, the Jews and Christians are performing their religious services in the cities where they were not even allowed to go before, let alone performing their own services.

Unfortunately, the editor was not aware that the Holy Prophet of Islam had insisted and in practice allowed the Christians to perform their religious services in his own mosque hundreds of years ago.

Therefore, it is not such an occurrence that should have astonished the people that it made the editorial pages of Chicago Tribune. The astonishment has only occurred because the Americans know that while they have signed the declaration of human rights, there is no way that they could allow any Muslim to perform services in their churches. Such tolerance of religious differences and courtesy could not be found except in the teachings and practice of our Holy Prophet[sa].

Astonishment could also be result of the fact that Muslim countries such Saudi Arabia do not allow the Christians or the Jews to worship in their mosques. The Saudis do not even let them enter in sacred lands. So the exception to their practice obviously was noticeable.

In essence, it is obvious that the Holy prophet Muhammad[sa] was the blessing for mankind. He established the basis for human rights protection that the world needs so badly today. There is no declaration and no philosophy that can even get close to take its place. The salvation of the world is in following his teachings and his practice.

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Jesus[as] son of Mary[as]:

8: Crucifixion of Jesus[as].

9: Jesus[as] in the Holy Qur'an

8: Crucifixion of Jesus[as]

We Muslims have a great love and respect for Jesus[as]. We believe in him as one of the chosen and beloved prophets of God.

The picture of Jesus[as] which the Western people present to the world is colored by their own heritage of Greek and Roman paganism. The Christians' Jesus is a composite of many Greek and Roman gods.

The Jesus[as] we believe in was a prophet of God. When his enemies tried to kill him on the cross, God saved him from the disgraceful death of a false prophet. He did not die on the cross, but survived and afterwards he migrated to a foreign land where he lived to a ripe old age and died a normal natural death.

There are paintings of Jesus[as] dating from the second century, found in the catacombs. These paintings show Jesus[as] as an old man, with typical middle-eastern Jewish features. Starting about the time of the inquisition when all opposing voices were silenced by force; when the Muslims and Jews were slaughtered and the books were burnt and history re-written, at about this time the paintings of Jesus[as] began to look like young Roman boys wearing female clothes.

First and second century paintings are in the hands of the Christians and reproductions of some of them have been shown in the Encyclopedia Britannica. This is the earliest historical evidence we have about Jesus[as]. These are not pictures of a young man who died in his thirties. These are pictures of a very old man.

Besides this there is no historical record from which we can in any way even interpret that Jesus[as] died on the cross. Josephus is the only historian who was a contemporary of Jesus[as]. He makes only a passing reference to Jesus[as]. The Encyclopedia Britannica, speaking of this says:

> "Twenty years later, according to Tacitus, Christians in Rome were prominent enough to be persecuted by Nero, and it was known that they were devoted to Christus, whom Pilate had executed (*Annals* 15.44). This knowledge of Jesus, however, was dependent on familiarity with early Christianity and does not provide independent evidence about Jesus. Josephus wrote a paragraph about Jesus (*The Antiquities of the Jews* 18.63ff.)—as he did about Theudas, the Egyptian, and other charismatic leaders (*History of the Jewish War* 2.258–263; *The Antiquities of the Jews* 20.97–99, 167–172)—but it has been heavily revised by Christian scribes, and Josephus's original remarks cannot be discerned." (https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jesus/The-Jewish-religion-in-the-1st-century#toc222994)

About 100 of the Christian era, the Roman historian, Tacitus and also Pliny the Younger make mention of Jesus[as] in discussing the treatment of the early Christians. There is also a dubious passage in the Roman historian Seutonius mentioning somebody called "Chresto". But it is generally understood about this reference that although it might be taken to mean Jesus Christ, it is clear that Seutonius did not understand it that way.

In addition I would like to present a few more quotations. The Encyclopedia Britannica says:

> "There are a few references to Jesus in 1st-century Roman and Jewish sources. Documents indicate that within a few years of Jesus' death, Romans were aware that someone named Chrestus (a slight misspelling of Christus) had been responsible for disturbances in the Jewish community in Rome (Suetonius, *The Life of the Deified Claudius* 25.4)" (https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jesus/The-Jewish-religion-in-the-1st-century#toc222994)

The Encyclopedia Britannica further says:

> "Fuller information about Jesus is found in the Gospels of the New Testament, though those are not of equal value in reconstructing his life and teaching. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke agree so closely with one another that they can be studied together in parallel columns in a work called a synopsis and are hence called the Synoptic Gospels. John, however, is so different that it cannot be reconciled with the Synoptics except in very general ways (e.g., Jesus lived in Palestine, taught, healed, was crucified and raised."

(https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jesus/The-Jewish-religion-in-the-1st-century#toc222994)

It is clear from the above that there is positively no authentic historic record which can prove that Jesus[as] died on the cross. But we can prove beyond the shadow of a doubt from the old second century paintings that at least, the earliest followers of Jesus[as], the people of catacombs, knew of Jesus[as] as an old man and never thought of him as a person who died in his youth.

Since it is obvious that there is no authentic history about Jesus[as], one may turn to traditional history to establish some clues about him. So let us examine Christian traditional history about Jesus[as].

Here is an example of traditional Christian history:
Christian "history" tells us that one night, on the 25th of December, in the middle of winter, in the high, cold hills of Bethlehem in Palestine, where not a blade of grass grows in winter, in the middle of the night, some shepherds were quietly grazing their sheep. They did not know it was winter because they didn't have thermometers in those days and weren't wearing their watches so they didn't know it was midnight. Here they were comfortably sitting on the hills when suddenly from the outer space came a star. It entered

our galaxy like one big flashlight, came down and sat on the roof of a horse barn somewhere.

Pretty soon along came three men riding along following the star. It seems they were trying to say, "Take us to your leader" but they didn't need much help from the shepherds since the star just sat on the roof and showed them how to find that horse barn. The three men came from the East but it is left to one's imagination how many thousand miles and what speed they traveled.

About this time, the chorus joins in up in the balcony singing, "Hallelujah", peace on earth.

The twenty fifth of December is not the birthday of Jesus[as] but was the old Roman festival of Saturnalia, celebrating the winter Solstice. At this time the sun begins its movement northward, signifying the return of Spring. This occasion has been the cause of celebration in every pagan, sun-worshipping religion since the beginning of time.

The origin of the story of the death of Jesus[as] on the cross and cross worship is purely pagan in origin. In the National Museum of Terme', at Rome, is the oldest specimen of art showing a figure on a cross. This picture is engraved in plaster and shows a figure with a donkey's head hanging on the cross and a believer is offering homage at the foot of the cross.

Arthur Weigall in his book Paganism and Christianity writes:

> "One of the earliest seats of Christianity was Antioch, but in that city there was celebrated each year the death and resurrection of the god Tammuz or Adonis, the latter name meaning simply, 'The Lord'. The place as selected by the early Christians as the scene of the birth of Jesus was none other than an early shrine of this pagan god, as St. Jerome was horrified to discover, a fact which shows that Tammuz

> or Adonis ultimately became confused in men's minds with Jesus Christ. This god was believed to have suffered a cruel death, to have ascended to Hell or Hades, to have risen again and to have ascended to heaven. There is one feature of the gospel story which seems really to have been borrowed from the Adonis religion, and in fact from other pagan religions also, namely, the descent to hell."

These same pagans became followers of St. Paul, the enemy of Jesus[as]. They removed the donkey's head and, being Romans, substituted the more appropriate head of the hated Jew. Romans have had a long record of killing Jews on the crosses by the thousands, so the Jew's head was a perfectly natural substitute.

The figure of Jesus[as] on the cross with blood, thorns and nails did not appear in the beginning. Collier's Encyclopedia says:

> "Actual representations of the crucified Christ first appear in the fifth and sixth centuries, and early examples represent Christ as alive, clothed and crowned with a diadem. The crown of thorns, wounds, and blood caught in a chalice appear in the Middle Ages."

Christians claim that Jesus[as] died on the cross. But it seems that for about six hundred years the Christians didn't know about it. It was only during the Dark Ages that they got around to putting blood and guts into their holy pictures. It was after a few centuries that they started drinking Jesus's blood and eat his flesh and assure their forgiveness.

There is one historic discovery that has come to light in these days. That is the Shroud of Turin. In the famous book 'Inquest on Jesus Christ' by John Reban translated from the German by William Frischauer, it is written on page 44 that the Turin Linen, presented

in Turin, revered by Christians and described by many Popes as the Shroud of Jesus, must be accepted as genuine. Decisive evidence is available to prove that, after crucifixion and removal of the crown of thorns, Jesus[as] was placed in the linen Shroud which is today kept in Turin and by virtue of the available evidence it is now a scientific fact that the body of a crucified man was not dead in medical sense at the time when it was placed in the shroud and during the time it reposed in it, because it can be clearly proved that the heart was then still active in the body. The existing blood imprints, their position and shape and their very presence in the Shroud are clear scientific proofs that the crucifixion was not accomplished in a legal sense and Jesus[as] was still alive when he was wrapped in this Shroud.

Photographs of the imprints on the Shroud represent a perfect negative with the anatomical, physiological, ethnological and bio typological realities and correspond with the body of Jesus Christ as examined by the experts of the German Convention.

This strange and exceedingly valuable material has really been preserved to this day. It was carefully hidden during the three hundred years of the persecution of Christians and it emerged after the edict of Milan in A.D. 312 from its hiding place in Jerusalem where it was kept in great veneration. In 431 A.D. the Empress Eudoxia acquired it for the church. In 1204, when Constantinople was conquered, the Shroud came to Besanco where it was kept in the Cathedral until 1349. It was then moved to France and Belgium and lastly in 1578 it was transferred to the Duke of Savoy's residence in Turin where it remains to this day.

The scientific research into the Turin Shroud was published in 1935.

The crown of thorns on his head was removed after the body was taken down from the cross and one big thorn which pierced the head was also moved and the bleeding started from this point which

is clearly shown in the Shroud.

It is possible that this bleeding occurred on the Cross but how could blood which had been on the body remain so fresh and in a liquid state that it was soaked up by the Shroud? There is further evidence after careful and photographic examination of the Shroud that there was a continuous flow of blood on the Shroud and this clearly indicates that there was activity of the heart.

It is clear from the above discussion that there is no authentic history about Jesus[as] except the accounts in the four Gospels.

The four Gospels also verify the fact that Jesus[as] did not die on the cross. Following are the facts from the Bible, in brief.

There is no mention in Mathew, Mark, Luke or John of any eyewitness actually seeing Jesus dying on the cross.

Jesus[as] never said that he was going to die on the cross in order to save mankind. He did not want to die on the cross, and that was not his mission or his purpose in coming to the world. He clearly stated his mission saying that he did not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets but to fulfill it.

When Jesus[as] learned that his enemies were trying to kill him, he disguised himself, hid in the Garden of Gethsemane, set up a watch, kept two swords ready and prayed. He prayed hard to be saved from death on the cross in the following words, “Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee, take away this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I will but what Thou wilt.” The Gospel says that while praying “his sweat dropped on the ground like great drops of blood”.

The gist of this prayer of Jesus[as] was that he might be saved from death, not because he was afraid of laying down his life in the way

of God, but in order that the will of God about His messenger might be fulfilled against the will of his enemies. This is the meaning of Jesus[as] saying, "Not what I wilt but what Thou wilt." (Mark 14:36)

Had Jesus[as] known that his death on the cross was God's will, he would never have prayed, "All things are possible unto Thee, take away this cup from me."

Furthermore, Jesus[as] confirmed that his prayers were heard. He says in John Chapter 11, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard and I knew that Thou hearest me always."

When the disciple, Judas, betrayed him, Jesus[as] called him a Satan… the Devil. Christians should think over this point. Was Jesus right or wrong in calling Judas the Devil? Jesus[as] even said that it would have been better for Judas if he had not been born. It seems the Christians should thank Judas for delivering the reluctant Jesus to his executioners so they can now be assured of their regular Sunday communion. Without Judas there could be no salvation and those who pin their salvation on a few drops of blood, either symbolic or otherwise, would be lost in Hell for ever and ever.

Jesus[as] predicted that he would not die on the cross but would be like Jonah[as]. He said that just as Jonah[as] was alive in the whale's belly, prayed while in that place and came out alive, Jesus[as] also would go into the earth alive, pray there and would come out alive.

He prayed at Gethsemane and God heard his prayer. He was put on the cross, but was taken down alive although unconscious. He was put into the sepulcher, a spacious house and not a grave, where he remained to regain consciousness and come out alive.

It says in Mathews:

"Then some of the Scribes and Pharisees said to him, "Teacher

> we wish to see a sign from you." But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Ninveh will arise at judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here."[1]

This story is repeated in Mathew 16:1-4, Luke 11:29-32 although John 2:18 alone refers to this to the temple of Jerusalem. This is Jesus' greatest miracle which unfortunately has not been fully grasped by some Christians. In the place of the sign of the cross now depicted by the artists, the symbol of Christianity in the early part of its history was the sign of the fish which again commemorated this great sign. It is clear from the above that Jesus[as] declares this as his only sign i.e. as far as Judaism is concerned; this basic sign was that of Prophet Jonah[as].

> "For as Jonah was a sign into the Ninehvites, so shall the son of man be to this generation."[2]

Jesus[as] had clearly prophesized that just as Jonah stayed three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall he, an ordinary human being, remain for that period in the bowels of the earth. It needs to be emphasized that resemblance does not mean similarity in all details but in the basic features. The significance of this sign was that Jesus[as] should stay in the tomb for three days and three nights; although the Gospels say he remained there for two nights and three days. Nonetheless, he was, like Jonah[as], under the protection of God. Several other people have been swallowed by whales but few have come out alive as Jonah[as] did.

When one studies the Book of Jonah in the Old Testament, one draws the following conclusions:

Prophet Jonah[as] entered the belly of the whale alive.
He prayed and remained alive in it for three days and three nights.
He came out of the whale alive on dry land.
His preaching term started after he came out of the belly; he started preaching to the people he was commissioned to and was successful in his mission.

Similarly, Jesus[as] too:
Entered the sepulcher alive. Prayed and remained alive in the sepulcher for not less than two nights and three days.
Came out of the sepulcher alive appearing to his disciples.
Got a renewed lease of a successful preaching term to the people he had been commissioned to: the lost sheep of Israel.

Now, Christianity claims that by remaining in a hell-like state in the sepulcher, he redeemed mankind of all its sins. If that is admitted, he can have no resemblance with Jonah[as] who was at peace with God Almighty because he was engaged in prayers. In other words, Jesus[as] was alienated from God. Similarly, if Jesus[as] rose from the dead, he would not have been like Jonah[as] who went in alive first, remained alive in the belly, and came out alive from it. If after rising from the dead, he ascended to heaven to sit on the throne of his father, his subsequent mission to the lost sheep of Israel would have been missed, unlike the success which accompanied Jonah[as].

The people of Nineveh did not see Jonah[as] enter the belly of the whale nor did they see him come out of it alive. But when Jonah[as] went back to the people of Nineveh and they saw it was the same person that had once taken to flight in fear, and God Almighty had forced him back granting him success where he thought there was no prospect, this became a mighty sign of the dominion and power

of Almighty God which the Ninehvites witnessed. This was the only sign witnessed by them, although admittedly his deliverance from the belly of the whale was an equally great sign.

God Almighty has immense powers and can repeat such a sign with another people when their prophet too enters the sepulcher alive and comes out from it alive. But all this will not have been witnessed by people closest to him and his enemies. This was to be followed by his successful travels to the lost sheep of Israel. If it took place, the sign of Jonah[as] would have been fulfilled, but if it did not, the sign of Jonah[as] would not have been accomplished. If Jesus' survival is not accepted, the sign of Jonah[as] flops, just as it would have flopped had he not left behind a trail of evidence pointing to the fallacy of Christian belief today. If Jonah[as] had told the people that he had remained alive in the belly of the whale, or come out of it alive, they would not have believed his claim, just as Christians are blinded by an age-old misconception and refuse to concede very tangible arguments.

Death on the cross was slow. Sometimes it took several days for a man to die on the cross. Jesus[as] was given drugs while on the cross, and remained on the cross only three hours or so. The two thieves crucified with Jesus[as] were killed after three hours by breaking their bones. Jesus[as] was unconscious and appeared to have died. His bones were not broken. Instead, his side was pierced with a spear. This was the only way to find out whether his heart was beating or not. When blood came gushing from the wound, it was clear that he was still living, and he was taken to the safety of the tomb for medical treatment. Blood never comes gushing from a dead body.

The Bible mentions that at least one hundred pounds of antiseptics and healing agents were carried into the tomb by the female disciples of Jesus[as] since all the male disciples had deserted him. The healing agents used for him are known as the Ointment of

Jesus[as]. A recipe of this ointment is found in over a thousand books of medicine written by men in different languages as Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic and Persian, ranging over a period extending to the second century after Jesus[as]. With regard to this ointment these authorities on medicine write that the ointment was prepared for Jesus[as]. It is also stated that this ointment is very useful in case of hurt and external injuries and that it heals the wounds and stops the flow of blood. The weight of evidence drawn from this source can hardly be overestimated for it is found not in religious books but in scientific works, and thousands of the physicians of every nationality and creed attest to its truth.

Later Jesus[as] came out of the tomb and disguised himself as a gardener. When he met his disciples, Thomas thought he was a ghost. This is another proof that his disciples were not with him while he was being treated and cured. He showed Thomas his nail wounds and assured him that he was still a man of flesh and bone and was very hungry. He was given food, which he ate.

Had Jesus[as] been truly resurrected, he would not have shown these wounds. Our Christian friends claim that Jesus[as] was an example of bodily resurrection after death and that we all will be restored to life in a physical body. But think about it for a minute. If Jesus[as] died and had been resurrected with the holes still in his hands and if after death, some of us will be resurrected with holes blasted in hour heads, arms and legs missing and insides hanging out because we were killed in some war or slaughtered in an accident, I don't think Heaven will be a nice place to visit.

There is only one place in the four Gospels where Christians can "derive" that Jesus[as] died on the cross and that is where it says that Jesus "gave up the ghost". Giving up the ghost never meant dying. Following is the exact meaning of the word ghost as Webster's New World Dictionary explains it:

"Originally the spirit or soul, now only in give up the ghost, to die; hence..."

Even in the other dictionaries just as it says in Webster's it is clear that now "give up the ghost" is taken to mean dying and some dictionaries even go further and restrict its use in this meaning for Jesus Christ only.

To Sum it all up, it is very obvious that there is no authentic history about Jesus from available authentic sources. The traditional history about Jesus[as] is mainly a product of pagan minds who became the earlier followers of St. Paul. Whatever is available in the Gospels leads us to believe that Jesus[as] was saved from the disgraceful death on the cross so his mission could be accomplished. Namely, so he could travel to other lands to attend to the lost sheep, the lost tribes of Israel.

So what about the people who continue to crucify Jesus[as]? The Holy Qur'an has summed it up in the following words:

> "Some of them are illiterate; they know not the Book, treating their own false notions as such, and follow only conjecture. Painful is the chastisement awaiting those who write the Book with their own hands, and then say, 'This is from Allah'; to gain therewith a paltry sum; so for them is a painful chastisement for that which they earn."[3]

References

1. Mathew chapter 12
2. Luke 11:30
3. Holy Quran Chapter 2:79-80

9: Jesus[as] in the Holy Qur'an

The Christian West presents the view that Jesus[as] is the physically begotten Son of God. This view, in fact, is a result of their Greco-Roman heritage and its pagan undertones. Of course, in accepting him as the Son of God, he must be worshipped. Another essential belief is that Jesus[as] was accursed of God because he was put on the cross and died there. The Bible says, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree".[1] Christians allege that Jesus carried the curse of all sins as he was sacrificed for their salvation. In commemoration of this, Christians symbolically drink the blood of Jesus[as] and eat his flesh in order to partake in this alleged sacrifice he made to atone for their sins.

Jesus[as] is exonerated from these allegations in the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Qur'an removed many misconceptions about Jesus and declared that he did not die on the cross as it was the fate of a false prophet. Although his enemies tried to disgrace him through crucifixion, the Qur'an upholds his claim that he was a true messenger of God.

Besides removing these misconceptions, the Holy Qur'an restored the proper respect of Jesus[as] as a prophet and a messenger. Furthermore, in order to remove all other doubts and man-made dogmas, Holy Qur'an described and revealed the true status of Jesus[as].

Let us first look at some of the misconceptions that have been removed by the Holy Qur'an concerning Jesus[as]. The most severe misconception about Jesus[as] is that he was occursed of God which makes him an enemy of God; just as Satan has been declared accursed being the enemy of God. The Holy Qur'an declared:

> "And their saying 'we did kill the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah', whereas they slew him not, nor killed him by crucifixion, but he was made to appear to them like

> one crucified and those who differ therein are certainly in a state of doubt about it; they have no definite knowledge thereof, but only follow a conjecture, and they did not convert this conjecture into a certainty."[2]

The above passage clearly declared that the enemies of Jesus[as] failed to ensure his death. This uncertainty prohibits them from declaring Jesus[as] as accursed of God.

Not only did the Holy Qur'an remove the major misconception about him being occursed, but minor details were also clarified.

The commandment was given, "Honor thy father and thy mother", but it appears from John 2:3-4 that Jesus[as] showed disrespect towards his mother by rebuking her, "Woman, what do I have to do with thee." The Holy Qur'an did not tolerate even this small blemish against Jesus[as]. The Holy Qur'an declared:

> "Jesus said, I am a servant of Allah, He has given me the book and made me a prophet. And He made me blessed wheresoever I may be and has enjoined upon me prayer and almsgiving so long as I live. And he has made me <u>dutiful towards my mother</u> and He has not made me haughty and unblessed."[3]

Not only did God describe Jesus[as] as dutiful to his mother, but He stated that it was a blessing given to him by God Himself. So how can anyone believe that he behaved improperly with his mother? Once again God stepped in Himself through the Holy Qur'an and removed the misconception about His prophet Jesus[as].

Once the misconceptions about Jesus[as] are removed, the question arises, what was his true status and what were his claims. The Holy Qur'an announced the true position of Jesus[as]. In chapter 5, we read:

"Indeed they are disbelievers who say, 'Surely Allah is none but the Messiah son of Mary'. Whereas the Messiah himself said: 'O Children of Israel, worship Allah who is my Lord and your Lord.' Surely whoso associates partners with Allah, him has Allah forbidden Heaven and the Fire will be his resort."[4]

"They are surely disbelievers who say, 'Allah is third of three.' There is no god but the one God. And if they do not desist from what they say, a grievous punishment shall certainly befall those of them who disbelieve."

"The Messiah son of Mary was only a messenger. Surely messengers like unto him had indeed passed away before him. And his mother was a righteous woman. They both used to eat food. See how We explain the signs for their good and see how they are turned away."

"Say will you worship beside Allah that which has no power to do you harm or good? And it is Allah who is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

"Say, O people of the Book, exceed not the limits in the matter of your religion unjustly, nor follow the evil inclinations of the people who went astray before and caused many to go astray and who have strayed away from the right path."[5]

The above passages reflect the following points about the true position and status of Jesus[as]:

Jesus[as] never claimed to be God.

On the contrary, he preached that there was only one God whom we serve and worship.

Jesus[as] was a prophet and a messenger of God. He was just like the prophets who were before him. As it was not done in the past, God Himself did not come but sent one of His prophets to deliver the message.

Jesus[as] was born of a woman, a righteous woman. He could not be the begotten Son of God because his mother was a human being who gave him birth. So was her child, a human.

Jesus[as] and his mother used to eat food. This shows that they were not free of human needs but were subject to nature's rules as the other humans. They needed to eat food for nourishment and, therefore, God being a person subjected to all human bodily changes is an irrational belief.

Jesus[as] being a human was weak. He could do no harm to anybody but himself.

Dogmas like the Trinity and that Jesus[as] was God are inventions of the people who strayed from his teachings. As was quoted earlier, it took these people a few centuries before implementing such inventions in the religion Jesus[as] brought.

All of the above propositions set forth by the Holy Qur'an can be validated by the Gospels, in the same sequence:

Nowhere in the Gospels, Jesus[as] declared to be God in a literal context.

According to Mathew 4:10, Jesus[as] preached worship of only one God. He said, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

He was known to be a prophet. When he went to Jerusalem, the

multitude said, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth."[6] He was also called prophet many other places such as Matthew, Luke and John[7]. In essence, he has been called a prophet in all the four Gospels.

The fourth proposition that he was born of a woman is believed by all Christians and is confirmed by the Gospels that Mary was his mother.

According to the Gospels, Jesus[as] used to eat food. Matthew says, "The son of man came eating and drinking".[8] Luke says, "they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."[9]

Gospels attest the fact that he was a weak being. It is written in Mark and John that he does not do anything by himself and prayed to God for help.[10]

There is no emulation of the cross, the "sacrifice", or of Jesus[as] beyond prophethood in the four Gospels. These were institutionalized centuries later and originated by St. Paul, who neither saw Jesus[as] nor was his disciple.

I would like to discuss in some detail how the statement of the Holy Qur'an about Trinity and cross-worship being a later addition is traced in the New Testament and the early history of Christianity.

During his lifetime, Jesus[as] always preached to the Jews and instructed his disciples to exclusively preach to the Jews. He commanded his disciple, "Go not in the way of Gentiles",[11] and "Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you".[12]

The post-crucifixion period was a difficult time for the disciples. Their preaching to Jews was unsuccessful because Jesus[as] was declared accursed by being hanged on the cross, yet they were unable to preach to the Gentiles because of open orders from their beloved master Jesus[as]. In these disappointing circumstances, arose a man named Saul who later became known as St. Paul. He, not being one of the disciples, self-proclaimed his authority as an apostle based on visions he claimed to have experienced. At that point, this self-made apostle determined to do exactly what was prohibited by Jesus[as] - preaching to the Gentiles. Three years after Jesus' persecution, St. Paul met the disciples Peter and James and tried to persuade them that they must preach to the Gentiles. The disciples tried to convince him not to do that. He claimed that Jesus[as] himself commanded him in a vision while staying in Jerusalem to do so in these words, "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they (the Jews) will not receive thy testimony concerning me... Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles".[13]

This was the first fundamental deviation from the commandments of Jesus[as] that resulted in the Christian corruption referred to in the Holy Qur'an. In order to preach to the Gentiles, St. Paul had to make certain allowances for them. In many cases he went to the extreme of abolishing the Mosaic Law, which served as the foundation of Jesus' teachings. For example, Paul states, "The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come we are no longer under the schoolmaster".[14]

Of all statements in the Holy Qur'an describing the true position of Jesus[as] the most important one states that he was not God and therefore should not be worshipped. As this is the root of modern day Christianity, it deserves careful consideration. It is such a fierce monstrosity to assign Divinity to a human being that one shudders after thinking how it invokes the anger of God. In the Holy Qur'an

God has displayed His anger in the following verses:

> "And they say, 'The Merciful God has taken unto Himself a son.' Assuredly, you have indeed uttered a most hideous thing. The heavens might well-nigh burst thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and mountains fall down in pieces. Because they ascribe a son to the Gracious *God*. It becomes not the Gracious *God* to beget a son. Verily there is none in the heavens and in the earth but shall approach the Gracious *God* as a servant."[15]

It is a miracle of the Holy Qur'an that God restored honor and dignity to this prophet of His, Jesus[as] son of Mary[as]. The Qur'an declares Jesus[as] close to God, and exalted by God Himself. The Holy Qur'an establishes that Jesus[as] was a prophet sent to call people to worship one God. It bears witness that Jesus[as] fulfilled his mission for which he was sent. In the following verses, it was clearly announced that Jesus[as] followed the instruction of God until his death. In the Holy Qur'an we read:

> "I (Jesus) said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me: 'Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them. But since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the watcher over them, and Thou art Witness over all things. If Thou punish them, they are Thy servants; and if Thou forgive them, Thou surely art the Mighty, the Wise."[16]

How beautiful is the manner in which God has exonerated Jesus of any wrongdoing attributed to him! How beautiful is the manner in which God has restored dignity of Jesus[as] that rightfully belonged to him! How beautiful is the manner in which God has refuted all those who claim that Jesus[as] professed to be God!

The Holy Qur'an, in numerous other places, has announced to the world that God sent Jesus[as] as His prophet. God loved him much, spoke to him abundantly, heard his prayers and gave him many signs and clear proofs in support of his truth. God gave him wisdom and knowledge of the Book and a teaching that was light and guidance for the people. Jesus[as] holds a status that God only gives to a few - to whomsoever He pleases.

References

1. Galatians 3:13
2. Holy Qur'an 4:158
3. Holy Qur'an 19:31-33
4. Holy Qur'an 5:73
5. Holy Qur'an 5:76-78
6. Mathew 21:11
7. Mathew 13:57,Luke 13:33,Luke 24:19 and John 6:14
8. Mathew 11:19
9. Luke 24:43
10. Mark 14:36 and John 5:30
11. Mathew 10:5
12. Mathew 7:6
13. Acts 22:18-21
14. Galatians 3:24-25
15. Holy Qur'an 19:89-94
16. Holy Qur'an 5:118

Second Coming of Messiah

10: Second coming of Messiah
11: Introduction of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
12: Character of the Promised Messiah[as]

10: Second Coming of the Messiah

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as] and World Messenger of the Latter Days, has appeared in the East, in Qadian, India. In his person were fulfilled the scriptural prophecies concerning the second advent of Jesus[as] the Messiah. He founded the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, an organization devoted to the cause of spreading his heavenly message to all corners of the world.

God spoke to Hazrat Ahmad[as] saying that He has metaphorically made him the Messiah, the son of Mary[as]. He has come in the footsteps of Jesus[as].

We are all blessed immeasurably to have been born during the time of one of the Holy Messengers of God. But there are many among us today who stand in danger of losing a rare opportunity. For only those can benefit from his advent who hear and perceive.

People cite the Scriptures that he will descend from the heavens, for it is written: "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels and shall gather together his elect…".[1]

But people do not reflect over the words of Jesus[as]. They strive not to understand what he has explained in his parables.

It had been written: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.".[2] In due course, Jesus[as] appeared. But the Jews rejected him on the ground that Elijah[as] had not first descended from Heaven to prepare the way for him as they were expecting.

Even the disciples were confused and sought guidance from Jesus[as]. The Bible states, "his disciples asked Jesus[as], saying: Why then say the Scribes that Elias[as] must first come? And Jesus[as] answered and said unto them, Elias[as] truly shall first come, and restore all things.

But I say unto you, that Elias[as] is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist[as].”[3]

God’s secrets are disclosed only at the appointed time, and are disclosed only to those to whom God opens the gates of His knowledge. Jesus[as], having been imparted this knowledge, explained to his disciples that John the Baptist[as] was Elias[as] and that they might accept him if they would. It is apparent, therefore, that what was meant by Elias[as] descending from Heaven was that John[as] should, as the angel had foretold before his birth, go before Jesus[as] in the spirit and power of Elias[as].[4] Thus Jesus[as] simply explained that when the prophecies speak of the “Second Coming” of a prophet from the Heavens, they actually mean the appearance of a prophet “Like unto him”. In this verse, he also hinted that the same would be true of his own “Second Coming”.

If Jesus[as] was really to come down from Heaven, why did he give a warning that people should not be deceived by the fulfillment of a few signs, but must wait until all be fulfilled? Would he not, in that case, have said, “They shall appear from the earth, but I shall descend from Heaven”, so that there could be no mistake? Why does he ask his disciples to endure and to wait? Why does he not say, “Accept him who comes from Heaven and reject all others?” Why does he not appoint any other sign but this? If he was to descend from Heaven, why did his disciples ask him, “What shall be the sign of thy coming?” Was this not sign enough that he would come down from Heaven with a host of angels? And could there be any mistake about him?

It was appointed that another prophet should come in the spirit of Jesus[as], and not that Jesus[as] himself should come down from heaven. To know him, therefore, we should ponder over the words

of the prophecies and should search for their true meaning like the diver who dives into the bottom of the ocean searching for pearls.

COMING IN THE CLOUDS

The promise of Jesus[as] that at the appointed time the Son of Man would be seen "coming in the clouds with great glory", with a host of angels has created much confusion in the minds of his followers. Students of science have forsaken religion entirely as a result of such scriptural references. They feel that wisdom should be expected of God. The trouble lies not in the references themselves, but in misinterpretation or misunderstanding.

Jesus[as] spoke in parables. There are so many examples of the same sort of symbolic speech in the Bible which are accepted as such, that it is difficult to understand why so many people cannot see beyond mere words in the matter of Jesus[as] and his second coming.

Webster's dictionary defines the word "cloudy" as "overcast; obscure; dark; gloomy; confused." The most likely interpretation in the case of Jesus[as] is that his approach will be of a "cloudy" nature.

Considering other prophecies made by Jesus[as] about his second advent, anyone or all of these definitions would apply. He has described his coming as "like a thief in the night"[5] and "at an hour when ye think not.".[6]

Thus, simply, this prophecy of Jesus[as] meant that his appearance would be of an obscure nature, and that he would not be recognized in the beginning. But with the help of God's angels, his presence would be made manifest to those who sincerely awaited his coming. Otherwise, how would it be possible for him to "gather his elect"? If he were to appear in the sky in a blaze of glory, the whole mankind would be so suddenly transformed by awe that it would

be impossible to recognize the faithful or "separate the sheep from the goats."

According to prophecies about the time of his appearance, the condition of the world at that time shall be dark, gloomy, and confused. The wave of false prophets appearing in that age shall make his own truth doubtful to many.

This prophecy certainly can be said to have been fulfilled in the appearance of Hazrat Ahmad[as]. It seems that no other prophet ever had so many difficulties to contend with in making himself known to people. His astonishing success in spite of the odds against him may be cited as one of the strongest proofs of the truth of his claim.

Hazrat Ahmad[as] was born in Qadian, a tiny village in India. It might be called one of the most obscure places on earth, having no transportation facilities or communication with the outside world. He was a quiet and inconspicuous person who never cared for the limelight. He lived during the height of the British Empire, when Christian missionaries from all lands concentrated their efforts on the natives of India, backed by strong churches and governments. The political and religious climate in India during that time was very much like that of Palestine in the time of Jesus[as]. In short, there was hardly a chance for a person in Hazrat Ahmad's position to attract any amount of attention to himself or his mission.

However, from the moment God revealed to him that he was the Messiah, things began to change in Qadian. People from all over the world were drawn to this little village, many of them leaving their professions, homes and families. Seekers after truth in faraway countries were informed of his presence in miraculous ways, through dreams, etc., and rushed to Qadian to see and believe in him. Even those people who opposed him were bound to admit that he was no ordinary adversary, for most of them experienced the

wrath of God in fulfillment of Ahmad's prophecies. Truly, Divine Forces were working on his behalf.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Jesus[as] warned his followers with regard to his second appearance that they should not be content with only a few signs, but should wait until all of his prophecies were fulfilled. Only then, he said, would the rightful claimant appear.

This being the case, we must see whether all that had been written concerning the time of the second advent of Jesus[as] was fulfilled in the time of Hazrat Ahmad[as] and at his hands.

It had been said there would be wars, and wars there have been in abundance and on a scale which had never been witnessed before, especially the last two World Wars. War and destruction seem to be the order of the day. It had been said that there would be pestilences and in spite of the great advance which the world has made in hygiene, unparalleled ravages have been caused by influenza and plague. It had been said that there would be earthquakes, and we find that the frequency and intensity of earthquakes now being experienced were never experienced before within twice the period. It had been said that there would be famines, and in spite of irrigation canals and railroads, steamships, and other facilities for the carriage of commodities, the world has passed through famines so severe that they have caused the death of many thousands. It had been said that rivers would become red with blood. The reports that come from warfronts make no other comment necessary. Iniquity abounds to such a degree that not only a brother betrays a brother but finds pleasure in the act.[7] All of these signs have been fulfilled so clearly that no doubt has been left concerning them.

Just about the time of Hazrat Ahmad's birth, the followers of

different religions had begun to look for the Promised One and God had in different parts of the world revealed to many the tidings of the approach of the Savior of the world; so that by the middle of the nineteenth century both in Europe and in Asia, men of diverse races and religions had begun to expect the Promised One, and many began to utter warnings such as: "Behold, the Promised One is nigh, arise and prepare, lest he find you asleep."

Thus, from the very moment of his birth Hazrat Ahmad[as], the Promised Messiah, acquired a resemblance to him under whose name he was destined to guide the world, for at the time of the birth of Jesus also the messianic hope among the Jews had reached its peak. In addition to an eclipse of the Sun and Moon that occurred according to prophecies in some Muslim writings, the famed " **the Great Comet of 1882** " made its spectacular appearance only a few years after he published his claim to Prophethood. This sign was seen by people in every corner of the world, fulfilling the prophecy of Jesus[as]: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven".[8]

As to the darkening of the Sun and the Moon and the falling of the stars and the shaking of the powers of Heaven, it might appear as if they had not yet been fulfilled. But those who reflect over sacred writings and are familiar with the working of Divine Laws have no difficulty in arriving at the real meaning of these words.

It is obvious that these words cannot be taken literally. If the sun were to be literally darkened, life on this planet would become extinct, as all life is dependent on the light of the Sun. If the stars fell from the heavens, this world would be annihilated, for every part of the universe is dependent upon every other and cannot exist without it. Again, if the powers of Heaven were shaken literally, not only humans but even angels would cease to exist. Jesus[as] himself has said that after these things come to pass, the Son of Man will take away the earth from the evil-doers and give the inheritance

thereof to the righteous. If the Sun and the Moon should cease to give forth light and the stars fallout of heaven, even the righteous would cease to exist, for their bodies are constructed in the same manner as those of sinners, and depend on light and air for survival. Besides, if the Sun and Moon were to be darkened nobody would be able to see the Son of Man coming down from heaven, and all of this dramatic activity would be wasted for lack of an audience.

It is clear, therefore, that this prophecy cannot be construed literally and that there is a hidden meaning in it, as is very often the case with revealed words; and it means that the Sun and the Moon will be eclipsed in those days and meteors will fall in large number, and power of religious leaders over their followers will be weakened, for in religious literature heavenly powers signify leaders of religion.

The hold of religious leaders over their followers has never been as weak as in these days and the sway of religion over the lives of the people has never been so loose. The churches depend on entertainment to hold their congregations together, and in fact, find it difficult to keep order during their services without limiting the sermon to twenty minutes.

Profanity and irreligion are rampant and people have come to regard religion as superstition and an encumbrance. This feeling is not confined to the followers of any particular religion. All religions are being ridiculed and whatever power religious leaders still hold over their followers is of a nature more political than religious. This again is a sign which has been fulfilled in these days.

All of these prophecies which had foretold the advent of the Promised Messiah clearly indicate that the present is the time when the Messiah should have appeared. For “When ye see a cloud rise out of the West, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower and so it is. And when ye see the South wind blow, ye say, there will be

heat; and it cometh to pass, Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth but how is it ye do not discern this time?"[9]

Thus all that was written having been fulfilled; the Messiah must surely have appeared and those who love him must seek him.

WHERE WILL JESUS[as] APPEAR?

Jesus[as] has warned many times against false prophets. In fact, his repeated warnings have misled his followers into the belief that all future prophets would be impostors (God forbid).

However, if we search the scriptures and read his prophecies with open eyes, we will have no trouble in distinguishing the true Messiah from the false. For he has himself specified the place of his appearance and has kept nothing secret lest some say: "How shall we find him by seeking in the wide world?" Has he not said: "For as the lightning cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together".[10]

This parable clearly states that he will appear in the East, and that his message and teachings will "shine" into the uttermost corners of the world. Like the lightning, he will be a shock to many people, for the shocking and unexpected truth he brings will hit them like a storm and deal a death blow to their false doctrines. Finally he will bring peace ... a new Heaven and a new Earth, where man will live in harmony through obedience to the Will of God. And so it is happening before our very eyes. Hazrat Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as], appeared in the East, in Qadian, India. He came in the spirit and power to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Like all previous messengers of God, he was at first rejected by all but a small number of elect. However, in only a few years his truth began spreading all over the world. His organization has been

established in over 200 countries; thus, fulfilling the prophecy, for even now his light is shining "unto the West".

"Wheresoever the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered together." From the day Hazrat Ahmad[as] declared that God had made him the Messiah, the little town of Qadian has been teeming with life. Righteous men and women from all over the world began flocking to his doorstep, led by visions and other marvelous signs from God. In a few short years Qadian, once only a wide spot in the road, became a teeming metropolis. Houses were enlarged to accommodate the overflow of guests. Schools and colleges were built. Young people began to dedicate their lives, as in olden days, to the service of God, and were sent as missionaries to spread the glad tidings in foreign lands. Thus, the wonderful prophecies of Jesus[as] have been and are being fulfilled to the letter.

HOW TO DISTINGUISH A TRUE PROPHET FROM A FALSE ONE

It may be asked, "How shall we know that the words of Hazrat Ahmad[as] are true and that God has made him the Messiah and that all he speaks is the truth, for we have been warned that 'Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ: and shall deceive many',[11] and again 'There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect!"?[12]

Here, indeed, is a warning against false prophets; and it is said that they shall show great signs and wonders; but is it not also said, "If it were possible they shall deceive the elect?" This shows that there are means of knowing the true prophet from the false one, by the help of which the elect shall know the true prophet and shall not be deceived by the false.

Their signs and wonders must be of a nature different from that of

the signs and wonders of the true prophets, for if this was not so, then how can we say that Moses[as] and David[as] and John[as] and even Jesus[as] himself were true prophets?

We find, however, that Jesus[as] puts forward his signs and wonders as testimonies of his truth, for we read that when John the Baptist[as] sent his disciples to Jesus[as] and they asked him, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" He answered and said unto them, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me".[13]

It must not be misunderstood from these words of Jesus[as] that all of his miracles and signs were of physical nature. Although many stories of his healing miracles are related in this sense, it is clear from other passages in the Gospels that his healing powers were more or less confined to spiritual diseases.

If Jesus[as] actually was able to bring the dead back to life, every true Christian today should possess the same power. For we read in the Gospels, "He that believeth in me (Jesus), the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.".[14] Either Jesus[as] did nothing of the kind physically, or else the Christians for generations have not been able to produce a real believer in Jesus[as]. For we know of no proven incident in history of a Christian restoring life to a corpse, or even driving out the simplest of demons.

It is obvious, then, that the miracles of Jesus[as] were of a pure spiritual nature, as were the miracles and signs shown by Hazrat Ahmad[as], his counterpart in our age.

It is written "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the

word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follows not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him".[15]

It is clear, therefore, that signs and prophecies are the testimonies of the truth of a prophet, and the wonders which Jesus[as] attributes to false prophets are of a nature different from those shown by God's prophets. They are tricks and sleights of hand, whereas the signs of true prophets are of a supernatural order which manifest the glory of God.

Such signs and prophecies are the means of knowing a prophet. The Messenger and Prophet of these days may also be judged by the signs which have been fulfilled at their appointed time.

SOME PROPHECIES OF HADRAT AHMAD, THE PROMISED MESSIAH[as], AND HOW THEY ARE BEING FULFILLED

Predicting the Great War, Hazrat Ahmad[as], the Promised Messenger of the Latter Days, said:

> "There will be death on such a large scale that rivers will run with blood, and even birds and animals will not escape it. Such destruction will overtake the earth as has not happened since man was born. Most places will be turned upside down as if they never had been inhabited. There will also be other terrible afflictions, both in heaven and earth, and every sensible person will realize that they are no ordinary phenomena, and no trace of them will be found in books of astronomy or philosophy. Then people will be seized by anxiety and they will ponder what is going to happen? Many will be saved, and many will perish. Those days are near; indeed they are at the door, when

the world shall witness a spectacle of doomsday. Not only will there be earthquakes, but other terrible calamities will also appear, some from heaven and some from the earth. This will happen because men have given up the worship of their God, and all their thoughts and their designs and their resolves are diverted towards the world. Had I not come, these calamities might have been delayed for a while, but with my coming the secret designs of God's wrath, that had long been hidden, have manifested. As God said: "We never punish until We have sent a Messenger".[16]

"Those who repent shall find security and those who fear before the calamity overtakes them will be shown mercy. Do you think that you will be safe from these earthquakes, or that you can save yourselves by your own designs? No, you cannot. All human designs will come to naught that day. Do not imagine that only America has been shaken by the earthquake and that you are safe, for you may experience even greater calamities. O Europe! You are not secure, O Asia! You are not secure; O you who dwell in the Islands, no artificial god will come to your aid. I see the cities falling and I see the habitations in ruin. The One and the Unique has long remained silent. Abominations were committed before His eyes and yet He remained silent. But now He shall reveal His countenance in a dreadful manner. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! The hour is not far. I tried to bring everyone under the security of God, but the decrees of destiny had to be fulfilled. Assuredly, I say that this country's turn is also drawing near. The days of Noah[as] shall appear before your eyes, and you will see with your own eyes what happened to the land of Lot[as]. But God is slow to wrath; repent so that you are shown mercy. He who abandons God is a worm, not a man, and he who does not fear Him is dead, not alive."[17]

All of these prophecies were made at a time when war seemed most unlikely. There was no indication that atomic bombs would ever be thought of or that the whole of Europe would be torn by the ravages of war. World Communism with it accompanying terror and destruction was still a thing of the future. The Czar of Russia was then at the height of his power, and it seemed impossible that his condition would ever be changed.

What should we conclude then about these remarkable happenings?

There is only one inevitable conclusion:

1. That there is a Living God who speaks to His chosen ones, Who imparts knowledge of the future, Who controls the affairs of the world and is Mighty and Powerful.

2. That Hazrat Ahmad[as], the Warner of the present day, was certainly raised by God in accordance with His promises in the Scriptures of all faiths.

3. That all Hazrat Ahmad's warnings pronounced with such authority and power have been fulfilled.

4. That now no other alternative exists but to believe in God and in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as], the Messenger and Messiah, who, like Jesus[as], is the way and the life, and who offers the only truth for men of our times.

FOR WHOM YOU HAVE WAITED HAS COME!

Nearly two thousand years ago, Jesus[as] foretold his second advent in the Latter Days. Christians, who claim to be the followers of Jesus[as], have been waiting for their master since that day. Is it not strange that they do not rush to investigate every claimant who says

he has come "In the name of the Lord"?[18]

"We have been warned to be aware of false prophets, and will not believe that the Messiah has come until we see him coming down from the sky" is their typical objection.

Jesus[as] clearly explained that false prophets would be known by their fruits. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. EVERY TREE THAT BRINGETH NOT FORTH GOOD FRUIT IS HEWN DOWN AND CAST INTO THE FIRE."[19] If every prophet in the future was to be false, would there have been any need to set such a standard?

Jesus[as] warned that there would be both good and corrupt trees, both false and true prophets. His parable was only a help so that people be able to easily distinguish between the two.

Again, Jesus[as] did not necessarily say that in a certain year a certain man would claim to be a prophet and that he would be either true or false. He expected his followers to have sense enough to judge a prophet on his merits, and decide for themselves. By his example of two trees, he warned that they should carefully examine each claimant to prophethood, and then accept or reject him on the basis of knowledge and understanding - For how can a man know whether the fruit is sweet or bitter if he is too stubborn to taste it?

References

1. Mark 13:26-27
2. Malachi 4:5
3. Mathew 17:10-13
4. Luke 1:17
5. Luke 12:39, Revelation 3:3, Thess. 5:2
6. Mathew 24:44
7. Mathew 10:21, 24:10
8. Mathew 24:30
9. Luke 12:54-56
10. Mathew 24:27-28
11. Mathew 24:5
12. Mathew 24:24, Mark 13:22
13. Mathew 11:3-6, Luke 7:20-23
14. John 14:12, Mathew 17:20, Mark 9:23, 11:23, 16:16-18
15. Deuteronomy 18:21-22
16. Holy Qur'an 17:16
17. Haqiqatul Wahy, Ruhani Khazain Vol. 22, PP 268-269
18. Mathew 23:39
19. Mathew 7:15-19

11: Introduction of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

19th Century condition of Islam

In the 19th century, Islam was a helpless religion. It was being attacked by all other faiths is such a manner that it was an obvious degradation. Even some of the educated scholars of Islam were being converted to Christianity. There was no one to defend Islam and it was reflecting in the general helplessness and depressed feelings among the Muslim masses. This pathetic situation was not limited to a particular area. The same situation existed with the Muslims of British India, in the Middle East or any other region of the world. Even many Muslims thought that the end of Islam was near and there is nothing that can change this phenomenon.

Founder of Ahmadiyya Community

In 1835, a person was born by the name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] in the village of Qadian, in the Punjab, India. God was to appoint him in the defense of Islam. He wrote a book *Braheen-e- Ahmadiyya* in 1880, and declared that the only living religion was Islam and the only living prophet was Prophet Muhammad[sa]. He challenged all religious scholars of all faiths to debate him.

His announcement was unique because he stated that he had received revelation from God and that he was the Messiah and Mahdi that people were waiting for over the centuries. His argument was that it is only a living religion and a living prophet by following which one can receive revelation and even achieve the status of a prophet. Since other religions cannot and have not produced any person who receives revelation, therefore, their religion cannot be a living one.

He announced this very argument in the following words:

> "The recognition of the Living God we have achieved through this Perfect Prophet (Muhammad[sa]) and through his light.

> The honor of converse with God, through which we behold His countenance, has been bestowed upon me through this great Prophet. The ray of this sun of guidance falls like sunshine upon me and I continue illumined only so long as I am adjusted towards *it*."[1]

He openly and clearly declared that his status in the eyes of God was achieved only by following the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. He states this in the following quote:

> "It would not have been possible for me to have attained this grace if I had not followed the footsteps of my lord and master, the pride of all the prophets, the best of mankind, Muhammad[sa], the chosen one, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Whatever I have achieved, I have achieved by following him, and I know from verified reliable experience that no man can reach God and obtain a deeper understanding of His ways without following that Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be on him." [2]

Belief about Jesus[as]

Because of his claim of being the 2nd Messiah, the question arose as to the belief among Christians and Muslims about Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] coming back to the world.

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Community announced that Jesus[as] did not die on the cross because it would have been a disgraceful death. Since Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] was a pure and innocent prophet of God, He saved him from the death on the cross. He explained that the real mission of Jesus[as] was to preach the lost sheep of the house of Israel who were scattered in many countries. He established by arguments and reasoning from the Gospels as well as from the history that Jesus[as] traveled to other countries and eventually settled

in Kashmir, India. He also announced that the tomb of Jesus[as] was in Sirinagar, Kashmir on Khanyar Street. He announced that Jesus[as] would not be coming down from the skies. Hazrat Ahmad[as] claimed and proved that all the prophecies whether in the New Testament or in the *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] were fulfilled in his person.

Hazrat Ahmad the Promised Messiah[as] restored dignity to the status of Jesus[as]. The Scripture says that anyone who hangeth on the tree is an accursed of God. When someone is accursed, it means that he becomes an enemy of God and God becomes his enemy. That is the reason Satan is referred to as accursed. He refuted any thought that he was in any way insulting Jesus[as]. Instead he was describing the real status of Jesus[as], a prophet who taught worship of one God and fulfilled his mission of preaching to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He stated his real feelings about Jesus[as]:

> "In Mosaic dispensation the Son of Mary[as] was the Promised Messiah and in the Islamic Dispensation I am the Promised Messiah; so I honor greatly the one whose name I bear. Anyone who asserts that I do not hold Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] in high esteem is a mischief-maker and a liar. I honor not only Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] but also his four brothers, as they were all sons of the same mother. I also regard his two real sisters as Holy, for they are all the children of the Holy Mary[as]."[3]

Message of the founder

It is remarkable to note that this claim and this voice was raised in the small village of Qadian. There was no post office, no bus stop, no train station, telegraph or telephone service. Amazingly, this voice was heard throughout the world even in the United States of America. Guests started arriving to visit him from all over the world. This was the fulfillment of the prophecy "wherever the body is,

eagles shall gather together".[4] In a short time Qadian was full of life and activity. Young people started to devote their lives and became missionaries. It was an unheard concept of Muslim missionaries to go anywhere to challenge other faiths. They were taking the trains; on the deck of the ships even walking to faraway lands of Africa, Middle East, Europe and even America. They were giving the glad tidings that the Messiah, the Prince of peace, had come and peace is at hand for mankind.

Community established

Officially Ahmadiyya Community was established in March 1989. Hazrat Ahmad[as] announced his purpose and mission in the following words:

> "God almighty has raised me, a humble servant, in this age so that the Islamic teachings may be published and propagated to all nations and all countries and thus leave no excuse for them. For this purpose God has provided me with hundreds of heavenly signs, knowledge about the hidden things, sciences, facts and I have been provided with hundreds of logical arguments. God Almighty has provided for me the means and methods of publicizing the religion, the arguments and proofs to an extent that no other nation in the history was equipped with these blessings. All of the hidden opportunities that have been provided to me were not given to any one of them. It is the blessings of Allah and he gives it to whomever He chooses."[5]

Name of the Community

The name of the community "Ahmadiyya" was chosen by its founder for a very specific reason. Many people may think that the name is used because the name of its founder was Ahmad but it is the

farthest from the truth.

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had two names: Muhammad and Ahmad. The name Muhammad reflected his majestic attributes and Ahmad referred to his attributes of peace and harmony. When the Holy Prophet[sa] declared God's message, his first thirteen years of life in Mecca were a reflection of the name Ahmad. He was persecuted; the Meccans punished his followers in diverse ways. His response was of peace and harmony and showed patience and perseverance. His life in Medina of ten years was the reflection of his name Muhammad when he defeated his enemies and finally became victorious and God established his majestic attribute.

The attribute of name Ahmad was also to be revived in the Latter Days according to the prophecies. This reason for choosing the name of the community was clearly stated by its founder:

> "There was a prophecy that the name Ahmad would be manifested again in the latter days and that a person would appear through whom the qualities of beauty, which characterized Ahmad, would be manifested, and all fighting would come to an end. For this reason, it has been considered appropriate that the name of this sect should be the Ahmadiyya Sect, so that everyone hearing this name should realize that this sect has come into being for the spread of peace and harmony and that it would have nothing to do with war and fighting."[6]

Highlights of beliefs

Emphasizing where it says in the Holy Qur'an "there is no compulsion in religion", he explained that Jihad of the sword is applicable, as a defensive measure in very strictly defined conditions and those conditions do not exist today. Therefore, our interaction with other

faiths has to be through discussions, dialogue and exchange of ideas. Instead, he declared a Jihad of the pen against all religions and forces who were trying to destroy Islam.

He also taught the Community to show patience in face of persecution. Just as Jesus[as] was put on the cross for preaching peace and humility, the followers of the 2nd Messiah faced the same circumstances. They showed humility, perseverance and patience and in turn prayed for their enemies. Whether it be in Pakistan, Bangladesh or Indonesia, the example of this characteristic of Ahmadiyya Community is manifestly clear.

Success of the Founder

The Founder of the Community was successful single handedly to defend Islam and restore its dignity. Upon his passing away one of the Indian Muslim leaders Maulana Abul Kalam Azaad wrote the following that is a testament to his success. Referring to the literature produced by Hazrat Ahmad[as], he wrote:

> "This service rendered by Mirza Sahib will place the coming generations under the debt of gratitude in that he fulfilled his duty of the defense of Islam by joining the front rank of those engaged in Jihad by the pen and he left behind him as a memorial such literature as will last so long as Muslims have blood flowing in their veins and the urge to support Islam remains their prominent national characteristic." (Vakeel, Amritsar May 1908)

2nd Manifestation

In 1908, when Hazrat Ahmad[as] passed away, another phenomenon took place that the world had only experienced at the passing away of other great prophets in history. The system of *Khilafat* was established in Ahmadiyya Community. God has promised in the

Holy Qur'an:

> "Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those before them".[7]

According to this verse of the Holy Qur'an, God establishes *Khilafat* in the community because He considers it to be consisting of believers and people who do good works. No other community has *Khilafat* among them based on the revelation received by a prophet. Under this system the *Khalifa* is elected through voting procedures but it is not a position that anyone desires. No one runs for this position or runs a campaign. If anyone does that, it disqualifies him just on this basis. So there is no payback after one is elected. The voters discharge their trust given to them by God. It is not a favor to one they are voting for. If they vote for someone not deserving in their opinion, then they are answerable to God for their mistreatment of the trust.

System of love and authority

It is through this system of *Khilafat* that Ahmadiyya Community is established in over 200 countries. It is established across geographical, racial and national boundaries. It is giving the message to humans of love and invites them to be one community under one religion and one prophet, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. All the prophecies in Islam and Christianity point to Messiah in the latter days who would gather all humanity under one banner and establish paradise on earth.

The progress of the Community is under the system of *Khilafat*, which is of love and authority. Every member of the Community has access and contact with the *Khalifa* and is voluntarily obedient

to him. No army, no police is kept to enforce this relationship. It is based on love for anyone to choose if they so wish. It is under this system that the Community makes financial sacrifices in the way of God and all its work is done without any aid from any government.

Throughout the last 125 years, not a single terrorist has evolved from this Community, in any part of the world, because of its teachings of peace and humility. On the other hand, it has produced a person Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan[ra] who became the president of General Assembly of United Nations and also Chief Justice of the International Court of Justice in Hague, Dr. Abdus Salam who was the first Muslim to receive the Nobel Prize in Physics and thousands of other leaders in their respective fields.

How to recognize the true Messiah?

Jesus[as] gave instructions as to how you will know when the true claimant showed up in the latter days. Jesus[as] clearly explained that false prophets would be known by their fruits. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. EVERY TREE THAT BRINGETH NOT FORTH GOOD FRUIT IS HEWN DOWN AND CAST INTO THE FIRE.[8]

If every prophet in the future were to be false, there would not have been any need to set such a standard.

A Prophecy

It is the decree of All Knowing God that the Community of the Promised Messiah will grow and flourish until the whole world is

brought together under one banner. Just as the world physically is getting closer God has planned that all of humanity will be brought together spiritually as well.

Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as] has summed up the future of his Community, more than a hundred years ago, in the following words:

> "O mankind! Hearken; this is the prophecy of God Who made the Heavens and the Earth. He will spread this Movement in all the countries and will give it supremacy over all through reason and arguments..... Remember, no one will descend from heaven. All our opponents who are living at present will die and not one of them will see Jesus, son of Mary, descend from the sky and then their children who survive them will also pass away and none of them will see Jesus, son of Mary, coming down from the heaven. Generations of their posterity will also perish and they too will not see the son of Mary descending from heaven. Then God will create restlessness in their hearts; that the day of the glory of the Cross had passed away and the world had taken another turn but Jesus, son of Mary, had still not come down from the sky. Then all the wise people will discard this belief and the third century from today will not have completed when all those who had been waiting for Jesus, both Muslims and Christians will despair of his coming and entertaining misgivings shall give up their belief and there will be only one Faith in the world and one preceptor. I came only to sow the seed. That seed has been sown by my hands. It will now grow and blossom forth and none dare retard its growth."[9]

Love for all

Ahmadiyya community today reflects the teachings of Prophet

Muhammad[sa] through the 2nd Messiah, emphasizing the commandments of love and compassion.

We hear beautiful teachings in the Mosques and churches such as: "Love thy enemy". What does it really mean and where and how is it practiced? For most people it is a good slogan, makes them feel good but has no practical implication. The community of the 2nd Messiah is the one that has put it into practice.

An incident took place a day before the devastating earthquake occurred in the northwestern Pakistan a few years ago. In the small village of Moong in Pakistan, a few members of the Ahmadiyya Community were in their mosque before sunrise performing their morning prayer. Some individuals riding on motorcycles, showered bullets at them and fled away. The floor of the mosque was full of blood and bodies of the dead and injured. Among the innocent who lost their lives that day were young, old and children. Since it was a small community, everyone was related to each other so every house was in mourning. Some lost their father, uncle, son or cousin. Even for Pakistan it was a gruesome crime against humanity. These were peaceful poor people who were not involved in activities that could possibly be used as an excuse for this kind of action.

It was such a shocking, cold-blooded murder that even the conscience of the Government of Pakistan was shaken. Although persecution and discrimination based on religion takes place all over the world, in Pakistan it takes place under the law with the full support of its constitution, courts and the police. So to affect its conscience is a rare occurrence. The government decided to send one of their high officials with large checks for each family affected in the village. The checks were for hundreds of thousands of rupees. Under the TV cameras running and the news reporters all around, the official offered these checks to the relatives of the deceased. However, the official got the shock of his life. The members of this

community said that God will take care of them and they would like all this money to be donated to the victims of the earthquake in northwest Pakistan.

The area where the earthquake took place was centered in the city of Muzaffar Abad. It is the city where the opposition and persecution against Ahmadis started a long time ago. The very first resolution in 1974 by a Provincial Assembly to declare Ahmadiyya community as Non-Muslim was introduced in that city. Slowly over the years, Ahmadis moved away from that area because of the persecution. That was one reason that Members of Ahmadiyya community were safe from the earthquake.

This is how you love your enemies. The very people who persecuted and showed their animosity were the recipient of gift when they needed it. This is the teaching of the Messiah in practice: "Love thy enemy."

Invitation to all

We invite all of you to come and taste this fruit and find for yourself that it will give life and a spiritual uplift. You will find the practical application of the teachings of peace, mercy and compassion. By following the Messiah of the latter days, you could achieve the spiritual status so much so that every morning of your life would bear witness that you spent the night righteously and every evening of your life would bear witness that you spent the day in fear of God, making sure that none of His commandments were broken.

We hope and pray that the day will come soon when all of humanity would get together under one banner and we would have not just one country but the whole world as 'one nation under God' and everyone would not just sing but actually practice the slogan: "Love for all, hatred for none".

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12: Character of the Promised Messiah[as]

Looking through the life of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as] it becomes very obvious that his life was in essence nothing but love. When we use the phrase 'Love for all, hatred for none', it truly represents the essence of the character of our beloved founder the Promised Messiah[as]. Three aspects of the character and personality of the Promised Messiah pertain to (1) his love of God; (2) his great devotion to the Holy Prophet Muhammed[sa], and (3) his kindness to and affection for mankind. Let us examine his life briefly in the light of these three categories.

LOVE OF GOD:

The love of God lay so deeply soaked into the heart and being of the Promised Messiah[as], and dominated his mind to such an extent that, as against it, every other emotion and feeling was almost as non-existent, so that he was a perfect embodiment of the following *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet Muhammed[sa]: "All the love and hate and dislike of a true believer is subject to his desire to win the love of God and to avoid everything which Allah does not approve of."[1]

When the time of demise of the Promised Messiah[as] drew near, he received revelations bearing on the event with such repetition and persistence that another man in his place would have lost his nerves. But since his love of God was of the fullest and most vigorous kind, and his faith in the life to come so firm and unshakable as though he were seeing it with his own physical eyes. So in spite of repeated tidings of this nature conveyed to him in regard to himself, he continued to work in the service of religion daily; with the usual singleness of purpose and complete absorption as if nothing disturbing had happened. Feeling, in fact, that he was now soon to meet his Beloved, he accelerated his efforts to gather more and more flowers to be laid at His feet.[2]

This was the same kind of state of mind which we find in the case

of the Holy Prophet Muhammed[sa] who in his last illness remarked with great love and affection:

> "O' my Lord, I am now soon returning to Thee, and I eagerly long for that nearness to Thee which comes thereafter."

The Promised Messiah[as] was not content with the love he had in his heart for God. What he longed for, with a depth of the keenest and highest emotions, was that this fire of love should be kindled in the hearts of others as well. In his well-known book entitled *Kishti-e-Nuh*, he says:

> "How unfortunate, indeed, is the man who does not know he has a God with power over everything. Our Paradise is our God; all our highest enjoyments and tastes are centered in God, for we have seen Him, and all beauty we have found in Him. This is a treasure that most well deserves that we should take hold of it; and this is a jewel which one must purchase, even if in doing so one has to lose one's entire being itself. O ye who have no share in this blessing run to this Spring, for it will quench your thirst. This is the Spring of life that shall save you. What am I to do, what should I do to make this glad tiding penetrate into your heart, with what beat of drum should I cry in the streets that this is your God, so that people should hear it; and with what medicine should I treat their ears to make them hear?"[3]

LOVE OF THE HOLY PROPHET[sa]:

In the small mosque which adjoined his house at Qadian, and which is known as Masjid Mubarak, the Promised Messiah[as] was once walking up and down, alone, and humming something softly to himself as he walked, while a silent stream of tears was flowing from his eyes. A devoted disciple and friend who happened to enter

the mosque at the time caught the words the Promised Messiah[as] was humming to himself with such an extraordinary depth of emotion. As he listened he found that it was a couplet of the well-known Muslim poet, Hassan bin Thabit[ra], who was a Companion of the Holy Prophet[sa]. It ran as follows:

O my well beloved,
(O Thou Prophet of God),
Thou wert indeed
The pupil of my eye,
Which has gone blind
After thy death. And now,
That thou are no more
I do not care in the least
Who else is there that dies;
For the only one
Of whose demise
I was afraid of,
Was thine own self![4]

The narrator of this incident says that when he saw the Promised Messiah[as] shedding silent tears like this, he was walking up and down the mosque entirely alone; and taken aback by this state of mind of the Promised Messiah[as]. The friend in great anxiety asked what was the matter which had caused him such tremendous grief. The Promised Messiah[as] replied that he had been reciting to himself this couplet of Hassan bin Thabit[ra], and that in his heart he had been thinking how great a thing it would have been for him if this fine couplet had come from himself.[5]

Most members of Ahmadiyya community know Hazrat Mirza Sultan Ahmad. He was the eldest son of the Promised Messiah[as] by his first wife. He was in the Civil Service, where he retired on pension from the rank and position of a Deputy Commissioner;

and naturally his experience in life was vast, and of a varied nature. All through the lifetime of the Promised Messiah[as], Mirza Sultan Ahmad did not join the Ahmadiyya Movement: he did not take *bai'at* and remained aloof. In fact he maintained his relations with those members of the family of the Promised Messiah[as] who were opposed to him in matters where the Ahmadiyya Movement was concerned. In the time of the Hazrat Khalifatul Masih[ra] II, Mirza Sultan Ahmad finally joined the Movement, and by doing so he turned the *three brothers into four,* but the incident which I want to mention here pertains to a period when he had not as yet joined the Movement. Once Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib[ra] planned to obtain some information from him in regard to the early life of the Promised Messiah[as]--his general attitude, behavior, habits, etc., and when asked, he expressed himself in the following words:

"One thing I noted very specially and very clearly in father. He could not bear even the slightest reference to the Holy Prophet[sa] in derogatory words. On the slightest hint or expression to this effect, his face became red, and the look in his eyes would harden anger; and he would immediately leave the place and the company where any such thing was said. The feeling which father had for the Holy Prophet[sa] was indeed one of *Ishq (Love)*--an *Ishq* of which I have not seen an instance in anyone else." And Mirza Sultan Ahmad repeated this last portion a number of times, with a great deal of emphasis.[6]

This is the testimony of a gentleman who had not taken *bai'at* at the hands of the Promised Messiah[as]; but who saw and knew him from the prime of his life right up to the time of his death; who himself died at the ripe old age of 80; whose experience of life, in the course of service, and on account of his literary pursuits, which were notable and highly appreciated, was very wide and extensive; and who, on the basis of his social contacts, could justifiably say that in his life he had dealt with people of all kinds, high and low.

But during the life-time of the Promised Messiah[as], the deepest essence of the impressions of Mirza Sultan Ahmad about his father, in his own words, was this that: "The feeling which father had for the Holy Prophet[sa] was that of *Ishq (Love)*--an *Ishq* of which I have not seen an instance in anyone else."[6A]

The unfailing sign of this *Ishq* is a spirit of sacrifice, of devotion, and an overwhelming jealousy for the fair name and honor of the beloved; and all these qualities we find in the Promised Messiah[as], in the highest degree and quality, in all matters where the honor of the Holy Prophet[sa] or the interests of Islam are concerned. Referring to the false and dirty propaganda of Christian missionaries against the Holy Prophet[sa], the Promised Messiah[as] says in one place:

> "Christian missionaries have fabricated numberless accusations and objections against the Holy Prophet[sa] and by means of this subtle fraud and deception they have misled a large number of people. My heart has never been tortured by anything so much as by the ridicule and insults they heap on his fair name. The offensive taunts and abuse to which they have recourse about the Best and the Holiest of Men have deeply wounded my heart. I call God to witness that even if all my children, the children of my children, all my friends, all my relations, and all members of my family were to be cut to pieces in front of my eyes, and my own hands and feet slashed off, the pupils torn out of my eyes, and I be deprived of all the wishes nearest and dearest to my heart, deprived of all my joys in life as against these tortures, the pain is more unbearable for me when such low and dirty attacks are made upon the Holy Prophet[sa]. Therefore, Thou, O heavenly Master, have mercy on us, bless us with Thy help and succor, and rescue us from this great trial and tribulation."[7]

Can any other instance of such jealousy for the honor of the Holy

Prophet[sa], of such devotion to him, be quoted from anywhere in the world at the present day? And we must remember that this was no empty claim by mere words of mouth. On the contrary the entire life of the Promised Messiah[as], all the big and small incidents in it, bear solid testimony to the truth of this claim, which even his most hostile critics found themselves forced to admit. Following his death, the *Vakeel*, a well-known Non-Ahmadi weekly wrote editorially:

> "In spite of the acute differences with him on some points of doctrine and belief, the death of Mirza Sahib has made the intelligent Muslims feel that one of their great men has passed away from this world, and with his passing away has ended that effective defense of Islam against the attacks of the enemy which was connected with his person.....Now that Mirza Sahib has completed his task, we have to concede and recognize the value and grandeur of the literature created by him. The great defense put up by him has not only torn to shreds the early influence of Christianity, gained by that religion under the British rule, and as a result of that prestige; in fact the whole magic of Christianity has begun to scatter like a cloud of smoke.....Moreover, in breaking the fangs of the Arya Samaj as well, Mirza Sahib has rendered a service to Islam which is of special significance.....Irrespective of how extensive our defense of Islam in future we shall never be in position to overlook and ignore the writings of Mirza Sahib."[8]

In spite of all these unrivaled services, when the Promised Messiah[as] takes his stand in front of the Holy Prophet[sa], this is the reason why, like a dutiful and obedient pupil, devoted and loyal, and like a grateful servant, every flower he plucks, he immediately offers at the feet of his master. He continues to repeat, over and over again, that whatever little he had achieved was all due to the virtue he had won by obedience to the Holy Prophet[sa] and following in his

footsteps. To quote only one instance here, he says:

> "On oath, in the name of the same God, I claim that just as God spoke to Abraham[as], and then to Ishmael[as], and Isaac[as], and Jacob[as], and Joseph[as], and Moses[as] and Jesus[as] the son of Mary[as], and finally to our own Holy Prophet Muhammed[sa], in a manner much more clear and bright than ever before, sending down a purer revelation, in the same way He has blessed me with the favor of this communion with Him. But in my case this is a blessing which I have derived only through the Holy Prophet[sa], and through my obedience and devotion to him. If I had not been in his *Ummah,* and if I had not followed him most implicitly in everything, this blessing would not have been extended to me even if my virtuous endeavor had piled up as high as a mountain."[9]

AFFECTION FOR MANKIND:

The state of mind of the Promised Messiah[as] was notable when the prophecy in regard to Pundit Lekh Ram's death came true, fulfilled in the most clear manner. On the one hand the Promised Messiah[as] was glad that the prophecy had been fulfilled, and a great sign was witnessed by mankind in support of the truth of Islam; but at the same time he was heavy at heart at the tragic end of Pundit Lekh Ram, at his failure to see the light. These are the words of the Promised Messiah[as] in this connection:

> "The condition of my heart and feelings is very peculiar at this moment. I have a feeling of pain and gladness at one and the same time. Pain because I feel that if only Lekh Ram had repented, if not much, to this extent alone as to refrain from foul abuse, I swear by Allah that in that case I would have prayed to God, and I am full of hope that he would then have survived the worst wounds."[10]

In Qadian there was a Hindu gentleman, Buddha Mal by name. He was an Arya Samajist of a very fanatical type, and he was always prominent in his opposition to the Promised Messiah[as]. With the intention that a prophecy of the Holy Prophet[sa] may be fulfilled when the Promised Messiah[as] laid the foundation of the minaret (in the *Masjid-i-Aqsa*) of Qadian, the Hindus of the town sent a complaint to the District Magistrate that the erection of this structure was objectionable since it would expose to view the privacy of their homes and their womenfolk. This was on the face of it a silly and frivolous objection, for in the first place in a view obtained from the top of such a high minaret it was not possible to see clearly into individual surrounding homes, so as to recognize anybody. Secondly, the disadvantage and inconvenience, if any, was equal for the Ahmadis themselves and others. In fact the minaret affected the Ahmadis more than others, for it was located in Ahmadi locality. In routine disposal, however, the District Magistrate sent the complaint for inquiry to the Magistrate under him in whose area Qadian was situated, and the official came to Qadian for the purpose, and spoke to the Promised Messiah[as] in regard to the matter. The Promised Messiah[as] explained that the underlying idea was not to build a minaret for any purpose of entertainment, or as a place of recreation. The motive was religious--to fulfill a prophecy of the Holy Founder of Islam, and to give the Call to Prayer from an elevated position, so that the voice should carry farther. Further Promised Messiah[as] said that some light was also to be installed at the top from which the neighborhood would derive benefit. The Magistrate on this occasion pointed to the Hindus, who were also present and said that these people had sent up a complaint that the minaret would expose the privacy of their homes to view. The Promised Messiah[as] replied that the objection could obviously have no weight, since the disadvantage, if any, was equally applicable to the homes of the Ahmadis as well; and he explained that the complaint had been motivated only by the desire to oppose him

and cause him annoyance. Here the Promised Messiah[as] pointed to Lala Buddha Mal and said: "Here is Lala Buddha Mal. Please ask him if there has ever been any occasion where I could be of any service to him but failed to oblige him; and whether there ever has been any occasion when he had it in power to harm me in some way but he refrained from doing so." Hazrat Hafiz Raushan Ali[ra], who was a very learned scholar and a member of the Movement, reports about this occasion that at the moment Buddha Mal hung down his head in shame, and did not have the courage to look either the Promised Messiah[as] or the Magistrate in the face; and this incident furnishes a glorious instance of the Promised Messiah's kindness and compassion even for his worst enemies.[11]

A near relation of Hazrat Meer Nasir Nawab[ra], the father in law of the Promised Messiah[as], came to Qadian and stayed there for some time in the early days of the Promised Messiah[as]. Once during the cold months, Meer Sahib sent him an old coat of his to serve as some protection against the weather. But seeing that the coat was an old one, the young man returned it, with an expression of displeasure and contempt saying that he would not wear the cast off clothes of other people. Now it so happened that the Promised Messiah[as] saw the maid-servant who was returning to Meer Sahib with the coat, and asked her whose coat it was she was carrying. She replied that Meer Sahib had sent it as a gift for his relation, so and so, but the latter had returned it with contempt because it was an old garment. Promised Messiah[as] said to her:

> "Do not take it back to Meer Sahib, for it would hurt his feelings. Give it to me, and I shall wear it myself. You can go and tell Meer Sahib that I have kept it for my own use."[12]

This incident illustrates with graphic effect the extreme consideration and solicitude which the Promised Messiah[as] had for the feeling and susceptibilities of others. In this case, he kept for his own use an

old coat which a man in need of it had disdainfully rejected; and, as he himself explained to the maid servant in question, his motive in doing so was to soften for Meer Nasir Nawab[ra] the shock he was likely to get when he found that his young relation had disdainfully rejected his gift. Another point on which this incident throws light is the great simplicity of mind and manners which characterized the Promised Messiah[as]---a mind and manner in which there was no trace of any such thing as personal vanity. He saw no harm in wearing an old coat which a needy person refused to make use of because he had thought it would be beneath his dignity to do so.

Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] was a prominent companion of the Promised Messiah[as]; and he had opportunities to see Hazrat Ahmad[as] from very close quarters. He related the following incident: "During the summer months, once, the family of the Promised Messiah[as] was away for some time at Ludhiana, and I had the occasion to go into the inner portion of the house. A room there had been newly built, and for this reason was cooler. I stretched myself on a bed for some moments, and happened to fall asleep. The Promised Messiah[as] was at the time writing something and walking up and down as he wrote, which was usual with him. Sometime later when I woke suddenly with a startled feeling, I found the Promised Messiah[as] lying on the floor by the side of the bed on which I had fallen asleep. In great shock at my disrespect I hastily rose to my feet, and the Promised Messiah[as], gently and with a great deal of affection asked what the matter was and why I had got up. I expressed my shock at having found myself on the bed while he had to lie down on the floor. Smiling gently and sweetly, he said to me: `Lie down again, and be at home. I was only keeping watch on you, lest the children, noisy in their play around, should disturb you in your sleep.'"[13]

On a personal note, I would like to mention an incidence related by my grandfather Hazrat Mian Imamud Din[ra]. He used to visit the Promised Messiah[as] in Qadian along with his two other brothers

Mian Jamalud Din[ra] and Mian Khairud Din[ra]. They were from the village of Saikhwan, about three miles from Qadian and among the Ahmadis were known as the Saikhwani brothers. He states that it was a custom of Promised Messiah[as] that he would stay at the Mubarak Mosque after *Isha* prayers in the summer time. Many of the companions would also stay and got the opportunity to listen to the Imam of the age. One day at such a sitting, someone mentioned some villagers accepting Ahmadiyyat probably for the fear of the plague which was spreading according to the prophecy of the Promised Messiah[as]. Meer Nasir Nawab sahib[ra] said the Holy Qur'an says that villagers are like that. They don't have any understanding and accept the religion because of fear or as copycats but really do not have the faith in their hearts. Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib[ra] also said that, yes, villagers are like that. I was so disturbed in my heart that I am also from a village but I feel I have faith as strong as anyone else. At the same time, I feared that it was possible that the Promised Messiah[as] also did not consider us as strong faithful people. These thoughts were going through my mind that the Promised Messiah's attention got drawn to the conversation between Mir Nasir Nawab Sahib[ra] and Maulvi Abdul Karim sahib[ra] and he asked them what they were talking about. They explained what they were saying and immediately the Promised Messiah[as] answered: Mir Sahib all people are not alike, for example these three brothers from Saikhwan are not like that. I was so thrilled to hear that the Promised Messiah[as] made us an exception and acknowledged our faith."[14]

It should be noted that it was not a courtesy remark by the Promised Messiah[as] about these three companions just because they were sitting there. At one time he said that all the three brother from Saikhwan were so devoted and it was hard to tell which one was more devoted than the others. And when the list of 313 companions were being prepared by the Promised Messiah[as], my grandfather went to him and said that he had heard that a list was being prepared of the first 313 companions and he would like to request that their names

should be added to it. The Promised Messiah[as] answered that he had already listed the names of him and his two brothers, and had added with their names the words 'with family'. So the Promised Messiah's remark at the above mentioned incidence was to show kindness and regard for his devoted servants and not merely a remark of good gesture.[15]

And last of all I present somewhat comprehensive note on the subject written at the request of Hazrat Sahibzada Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib[ra] a long time ago by Hazrat Dr. Meer Mohammed Ismail[ra]. In the course of this article he wrote:

> "The Promised Messiah[as] was very gentle and mild of heart and temperament, merciful and magnanimous, very hospitable, the most courageous among men. In time of hardship and trial, when the hearts of others sank in their breasts, he marched forward fearless like a lion. Forgiveness, overlooking the faults of others, generosity, humility of mind, loyalty, simplicity, love of God, love for the Holy Prophet[sa], respect for those holy persons eminent in the history of Islam, sanctity of commitment, beauty in actual daily life, dignity, jealous regard where a point of honor was involved, high resolve, a smiling face and an open brow---these were the most prominent traits of his character and personality. I first saw the Promised Messiah[as] when I was a child, he disappeared from my view in death when I was a young man of 27. But most solemnly I go on oath before God that in all my life I have never seen a man better in morals than he, more virtuous, more full of kindness and compassion and solicitude for the welfare of others, more full of love for God and His Apostle. Indeed, he was a light which shone in this world for the benefit of mankind, and he was like the gentle and fruitful rain which comes down after difficult years of dryness and enriches the earth."[16]

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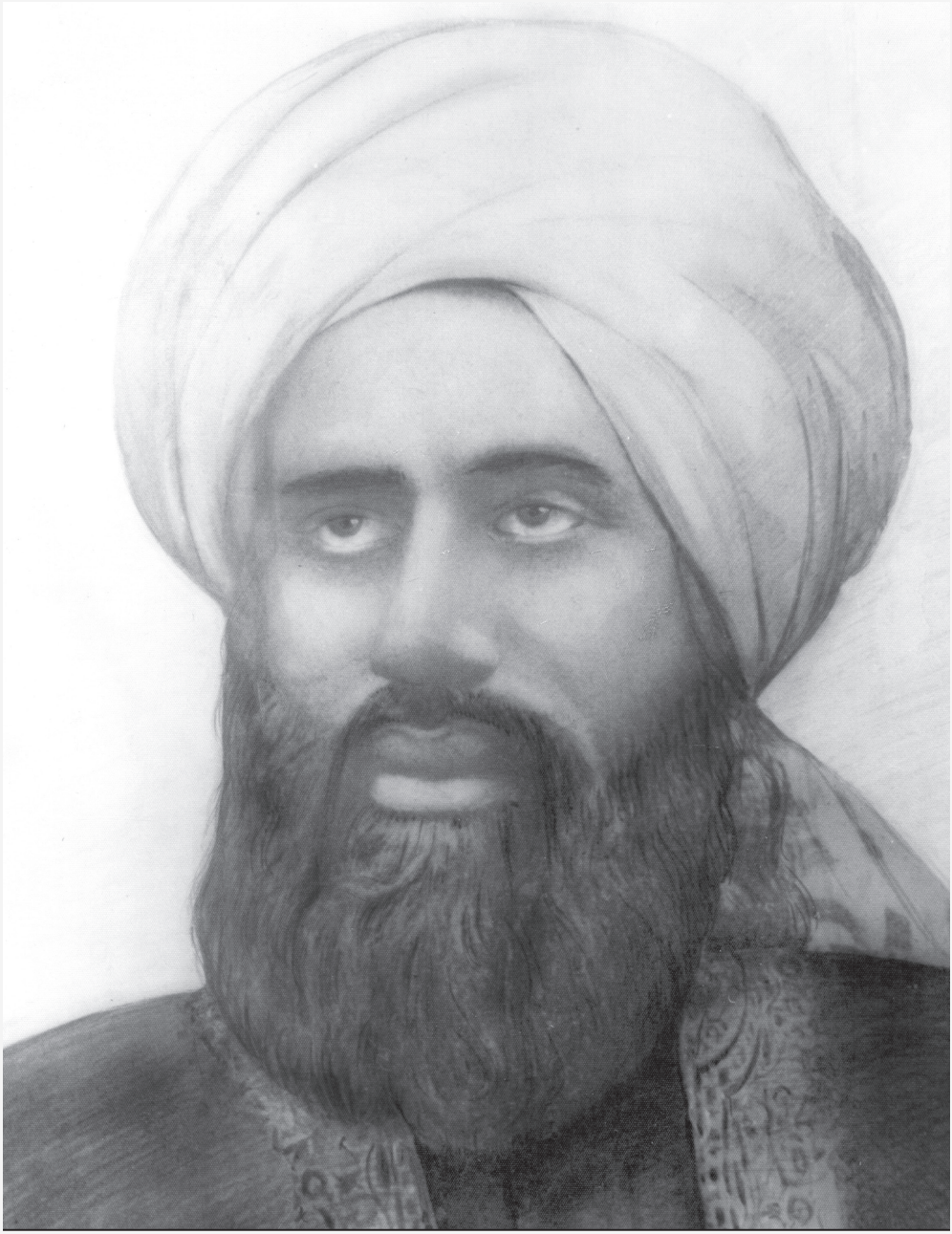
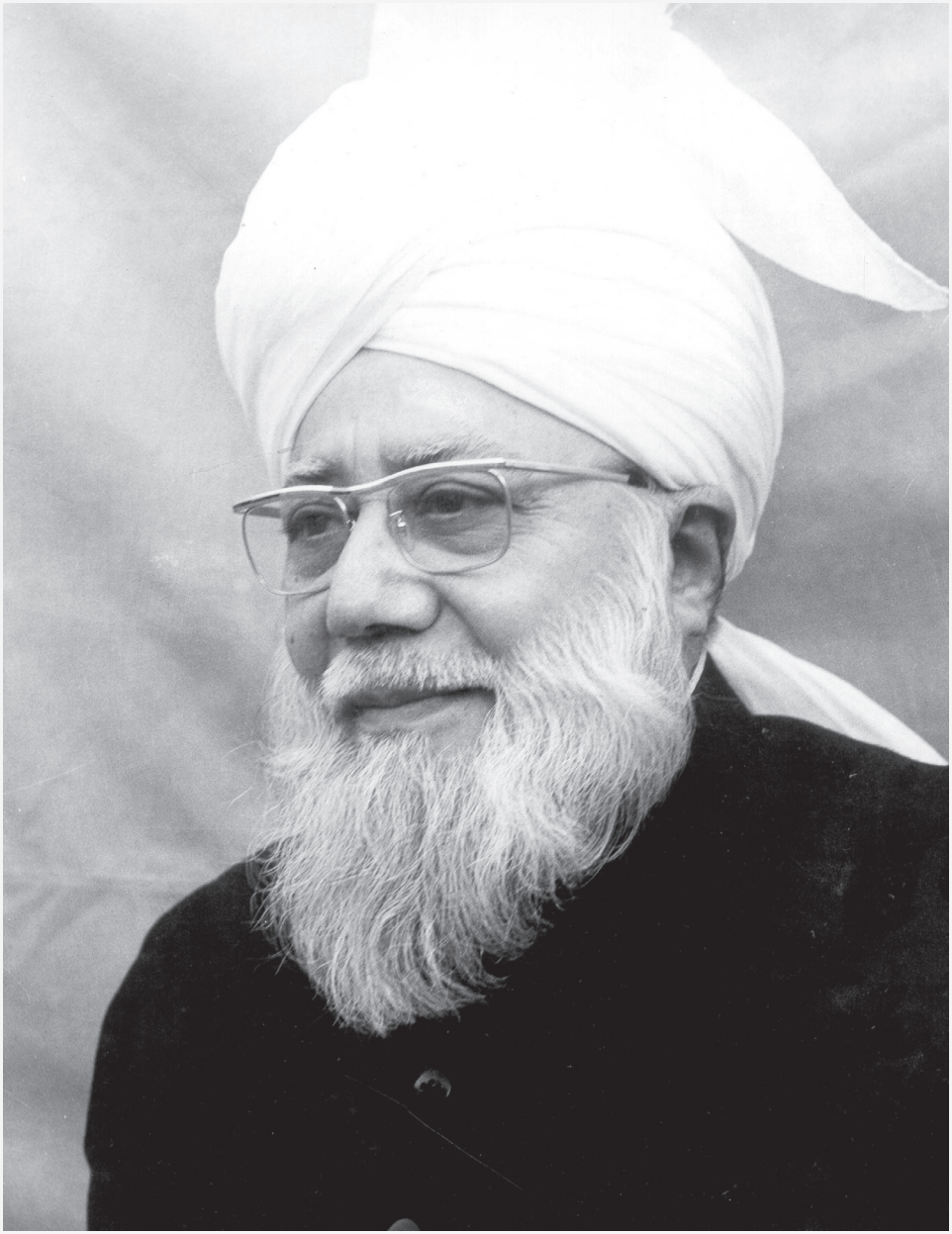


Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-din
Khalifatul Masih I[ra]

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmood Ahmad
Khalifatul Masih II[ra]



Hazrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad
Khalifatul Masih III

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad
Khalifatul Masih IV

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad
Khalifatul Masih V[aba]

Khilafat (Caliphate) of Ahmadiyyat:

13: Paradise on Earth through Khilafat
14: Divine Support of Khilafat

13: Paradise on Earth through *Khilafat* (Caliphate)

Primitive Structures of Society

Ever since human beings decided to live under a structured society, debates have been taking place as to what is the best way to accomplish the perfect society. Human beings want to make sure that their basic needs for existence, security, continuity of their race and overall happiness is guaranteed under such a system.

Initially human beings were scattered in various geographical areas and did not have much contact with each other's society. Under those circumstances, a system of tribes and clans evolved. Each tribe came up with their own rules to live by that provided them security and peace from each other as well as from the outsiders. Some societies are still ruled under this system such as in remote areas of Africa and Asia.

When some human beings started to travel and the tribes started to get together and make bigger societies, it gave rise to a new system of kingdoms taking over larger areas. Eventually, it evolved into combining the kingdoms into bigger political structures and there were emperors who ruled over many kings.

Under all of these systems, the conversations and debates still take place as to what is the best system for the human race. The debates over Democracy, Communism, Socialism, separation of Church and State all relate to the same subject. The opinion of the general population needed to be heard under all these systems and the debate started whether it is better under a Parliamentary system or a Republic etc. The main clash of ideas in these discussions involved the public good versus the individual desires in a society. It is still debated which should take precedent and to what level.

God's System

According to the Holy Qur'an, God presented a plan for the human race for their betterment as a society. God declared that the system He proposed is the best system for them because He is the All-Knowing. God appointed Adam[as] as his first *Khalifa* on earth and taught him knowledge directly.

The very first responsibility of the governing body was established to guarantee all human beings food, clothing, shelter and water. It is amazing what God established as the basic and rudimentary responsibility for a government, is still the same what today worldly governments consider as their ultimate goal. Along with the basic necessities of human beings, God also provided the spiritual guidance through His *Khalifa* Adam[as] because it was fundamental to the inner peace and happiness of the human beings.

As the human beings developed themselves physically and spiritually, God responded to them with series of His *Khulufah*, which we refer to as the Prophets to keep up with the level of the human understanding and achievements. Prophet Noah[as] was taught to further the spiritual status of human beings, and Prophet Abraham[as] established the unity of God in such a manner which was unprecedented in anticipation of uniting the human race in a single bonded society.

Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] brought the final teachings in the shape of the Holy Qur'an through which God gave the human beings a comprehensive, detailed and clear message to live by. It also established all the rules and regulations to structure a human society on a global basis and bring about the eventual peaceful society that humans wished for since their beginning.

Khulufah of God and *Khulufah* of the Prophet

The *Khulufah* of God (Prophets) had a limitation. As human beings, they had a limited life span. Sometimes it was not enough time to accomplish all their goals and objectives assigned to them. Therefore, a system of *Khulufah* of the Prophets evolved. In some cases the Prophets appointed their *Khalifa* in their lifetime and in other cases, the followers of the Prophet elected one after his passing away. The function of the *Khulufah* of the Prophets was to continue the mission of the particular Prophet and do their best in meeting the objectives set forth by the Prophet under the guidance given by God.

Joshua, the first *Khalifa* of Prophet Moses[as], took over his mission and brought the Israelites to the Promised Land and thus accomplished the mission of Moses[as]. St. Peter as the *Khalifa* of Jesus[as] took his message to other lands where the Israelites had established themselves. The *Khulufah* of Prophet Muhammad[sa], Abu Bakr[ra], Omar[ra], Othman[ra] and Ali[ra] expanded the Islamic way of life to the Persian Empire on the East and the Roman Empire towards the North-West.

The question that needed to be pondered over was why the system of *Khulufah* under one prophet succeeded and not under some others. For example, after the first four *Khulufah* under Prophet Muhammad[sa], it changed into a kingship and it was not a pure system of *Khulufah* as it started out to be. On the other side, the system that started with St. Peter has existed for over two thousand years and has continued regardless of its weaknesses and problems on the way. The Holy Qur'an has pointed out the previous appointments of *Khulufah* so we can analyze and learn from the experiences of various societies that evolved under these systems.

The Promised Messiah[as]

Hazrat Ahmad[as] appeared as the *Khalifa* of Prophet Muhammad[sa] for the last one thousand years of the current cycle of human life. He also fulfilled the prophecies of the second coming of the Messiah. In all the prophecies of the Christian tradition as well as the Islamic tradition, it is clear that the peace on earth and the establishment of paradise on earth will take place at the appearance of the Messiah in the latter days. Under the Islamic tradition, it will take place throughout the world as one family under one Prophet (Muhammad[sa]) and under the final Law given by God in the shape of the Holy Qur'an.

This mission is again of such magnitude that it could not be fulfilled in the lifetime of the Promised Messiah[as] but will take place under his *Khulufah*. A system of electing *Khulufah* was established to continue his mission throughout the world over a hundred years ago and currently we are living in the time of his fifth *Khalifa*. As the Promised Messiah[as] foretold this system of *Khulufah* will stay with us for the rest of this cycle of human race.

System of Khilafat

The system of *Khilafat* under the Promised Messiah[as] is based on the guidance from God. The person who is given this position is not obligated to anyone for his position. He is not desirous of that position and therefore does not run a campaign to run for elections. One who votes for him at the election fulfils his duty and does not do any favor to him and therefore, the *Khalifa* does not owe anything to him for his vote. This system was established by using the good things in the long running Catholic system of elections of the Popes but in considering the Islamic principles as laid out in the Holy Qur'an.

Under this system of *Khilafat*, there are no taxes; it is run exclusively with voluntary contributions of the members of the community. This keeps the outside influences impossible. The members of the community are not forced by any law to share their wealth, unlike a system of government where the public is forced to pay and the individuals keep on striving to avoid payment. Under the *Khilafat*, members pay voluntarily and consider it a blessing.

The relationship of the *Khalifa* with his members is a combination of love and authority. The *Khalifa* is the ultimate authority under this system. However, the *Khalifa* has a direct contact with all the members and there is a mutual feeling of love on both sides because there is no army that enforces allegiance to him, it comes from the hearts. Members know and feel that their *Khalifa* loves them and has their interest in mind at all times.

System of Government

Alongside the system of *Khilafat*, there always will be a system of government. So the question arises which system is better for human beings. The Holy Qur'an gives preference and promotes a system, which is based on consultation but does not rule out any other system as a bad one as long as it is based on true justice. There were kings such as David[as] and Solomon[as] whom God declared as Prophets (His *Khulufa* on earth) because they ruled with justice.

Islam also establishes that a vote in consultation or elections is a trust that needs to be discharged. It is not a right or a privilege that can be sold or bought. A person discharging his duty by voting is answerable to God alone as to why he voted in the manner that he did. He should not and cannot expect anything in return from the person that he voted for. There are not to be any negative campaigns but only good things can be said about a proposed person. It also rules out one voting for oneself because a person desirous of a

position should not be given that position. It declares that God's blessing will not be with any such person.

Regardless of the system, justice must prevail in exercising the duties of the government. Great power is given to the Justices under the Islamic system under which they have the power of calling anyone, powerful or weak, to the witness stand. The second *Khalifa* of Prophet Muhammad[sa] established the salary system for the government employees. He assigned the highest wages for the Justices. One of the reasons was to avoid the temptation of bribery in their decision making process.

Alongside all these systems of government, the *Khalifa* is in an advisory position and not a ruler. This clarifies the Islamic stand of Church versus State.

Promised Messiah's Khulufah

The Promised Messiah's community has shown tremendous progress under his *Khulufah* in the first one hundred years. There are missions in over 200 countries, mosques being built all over the world and literature being made available in almost all the known languages. It has established a system of religious administration following the Islamic principles exclusively.

Under this system, it is astonishing to see that no terrorist activities have taken place in this community. It is even more noticeable when we consider that it has members all over the world from all ethnic, geographical, racial and political lines. In such a wide variety of membership, it is miraculous that not a single incident of such unlawful and inhumane activity has taken place. Its members act under the instructions of its Khalifa as one unit. When the persecution takes place in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh or Indonesia and they are told to show patience, humility and humbleness, that

is exactly what they do. They do not lose their tempers but show patience as they are instructed. On the other hand, this organization has produced the first Muslim winner of Nobel Prize in Nuclear Physics (Dr. Abdus Salaam) and one unprecedented personality of holding the office of Chief Justice of International Court of Justice and the President of the United Nations General Assembly (Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan[ra].

It is under this system that a town was established in Pakistan, named Rabwah, under the guidelines established by Islam. This is an important factor that needs to be looked at because it provides a practical proof how a town should run its affairs. In this town the basic needs of the people were taken care of. No one was homeless, the basic food was available to anyone, water sources were available to people free of charge and the system was in place to make sure that other needs of widows, orphans and poor were taken care of. In essence, the basic requirements established by God through Adam[as] (His first *Khalifa*) were fulfilled. At the same time, the religious and spiritual training of its citizens was looked after.

The streets, mosques, schools and hospital were built with the volunteer community based efforts. The rich and the poor hauled bricks and felt proud that they were part of building their own town. Education was made available to anyone male or female and was promoted constantly.

It was a model city to be copied until 1974 when the Pakistan's laws were changed and it was not under the full administration of the Ahmadiyya community. However, it is an example of how a town can be established and run under the laws established by God for the betterment of the society even in a third world country where the resources are scarce.

Establishment of Paradise on Earth

The Promised Messiah[as] announced a New World Order in his book *Al-Wasiyyat* (The Will) under the Divine guidance. Under the program outlined the human beings will accomplish tranquility, peace and paradise on earth under the system of *Khilafat* after him. The *Khulufah* are not the government and are only answerable to God. They do not belong to a political party, country, race or tribe. Their view of the world is based on one human race regardless of the color of the skin, creed or origin. They have no borders to protect, no taxation to enforce. They are also the international central location for intelligence, information and consultations because of their personal relationships with individuals in their community worldwide.

A New World Order can only be established when there are no borders, nor political priorities and the needs of the human beings can be looked after regardless of selfish attitudes of individual communities. It can only be established through a single entity covering the globe without ambitions of power and glory. That entity has been designated as the community of the Promised Messiah[as] under his *Khulufah* and in accordance with the prophecies, it will one day, God Willing, establish Paradise on earth.

Invitation to all

We invite people of all nations and in particular the Christians and the Muslims to accept the Promised One who has been sent in the spirit of Jesus[as]. He is the way, the light and the path for salvation under the guidance of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and the final Message of God, the Holy Qur'an. Jesus[as] told his followers to judge the tree by its fruit. So it behooves all Christians to come and taste this fruit before passing judgment. The Holy Prophet[sa] had commanded his followers that when the Messiah appears to go to

him and give him his greetings of peace even if they would have to travel on their knees in snow. You will find that for today's problems, the only acceptable interpretation of religious principles is what the Promised Messiah[as] has presented because it came through the Holy Ghost. So come and see the fruits of the tree of the second Messiah through his *Khulufah* and join in the effort of bringing peace, tranquility and paradise on earth. This is the real pursuit of happiness for all mankind. If not you, your next generation or the one after that will accomplish this goal because "It has been written and so it shall be done".

14: Divine Support of Khilafat

Innallaha Ma'anaa (Allah is with us):

It was over fourteen hundred years ago that our Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] along with Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] were hiding in a cave on their way to Medina. They were trying to escape the enemies in Mecca who were looking for them and had pledged to kill the Holy Prophet[sa] and destroy his new religion called Islam. The enemy had reached the mouth of the cave. The Holy Prophet[sa] and Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] could hear the sound of their footsteps outside and there was no other way out of the cave.

That is the time when Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] assured Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra]: *La Tahzun, Innallaha Ma'anaa*, "Don't worry, Allah is with us". These were words of strength and devotion, full of faith and certainty.

Allah protected them and the enemy went away and the words of the Holy Prophet[sa] came true profoundly and in an unbelievable manner when Allah protected them with the help of a weak web of a spider. Later on, throughout the life of the Holy Prophet[sa] these words *Innallaha Ma'anaa* kept on proving that they were true. Whether it was the battle of *Badr* with 300 ill-prepared Muslims against 1000 skilled and armored Meccans, all the way up to the time of victory of Mecca, it was clear to everyone that Allah was with the Holy Prophet[sa] and his community. In a way these words applied to Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] since he became the first *Khalifa* of Islam that Allah is with him also. Holy Prophet[sa] did not say that Allah is with "him" but Allah is with "us" which included Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra]. So the help from Allah and signs that He was with the community of Muslims continued throughout the *Khilafat* of Islam of which the first *Khalifa* was the man in the cave with the Holy Prophet[sa] to whom he had spoken the words *Innallaha Ma'anaa*.

Revelations of Promised Messiah[as]:

With the advent of the Promised Messiah[as] in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, in accordance with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Allah once again assured His appointee that He is with him.

Allah revealed to him at many occasions, to assure him of His support.

Inni Ma'akaa wa maa ahlikaa: I am with you and with your progeny.[1]
Inni Maarrasool Aqoom: I will stand by My messenger.[2]
Inni Maarrasool Ajeeb: I will answer taking the side of My messenger.[3]

These are just a few of the revelations. Promised Messiah[as] had explained himself that it was the assurance of Allah being with him that provided him the support. He said that he received so much hate mail that the total of letters reached in thousands. Each one of these letters had so much filth and name-calling in it that a person could not bear to read even one of them. But he said that every night when he would put his head on the pillow to sleep, he would start getting the revelations and assurance from Allah that He is with him and He will be his protector. These were the same soothing words that Allah had spoken to remove the concerns and uneasiness of two of His people in that cave " *Innallaha Ma'anaa*".

Allah's signs for support of Jama'at:

Allah provided the same support to the community of the Promised Messiah[as]. There were specific revelations that applied to different *Khulufah* of Ahmadiyya Community and we saw them fulfilled. At every occasion when the enemy came close by and it looked as if

they would succeed in their evil plans, Allah's decree prevailed and He showed us through the results that He was with us.

In particular, there is a revelation of the Promised Messiah which specifically applies to our fifth *Khalifa* Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad. *Inni Ma'akaa Ya Masroor*. "I am with you O' Masroor"[4].

It is under this revelation that we have seen numerous times how Allah is with us and how he supports us at every calamity. It is precisely what our spiritual leader *Hudhur* advises us at those occasions whether it is a massacre in Lahore mosques or individuals persecuted in Bangladesh, Indonesia or any other part of the world. He has said this in so many sermons and speeches that "Allah is with us".

Biggest opponent Pakistan's destiny

Among all the nations, Pakistan has been in the forefront in opposition and persecution of our community. It is the only country in the world in which violation of human rights and religious freedom is exercised by law. Whether it is the lawmakers of that country, the administration, judiciary or the law enforcement agencies, they are all involved in violation of fundamental human rights of Ahmadis collectively.

It is amazing how Allah has shown his signs in reference to Pakistan in support of the Jama'at. The country of Pakistan today has lost its prestige and honor as a nation. Every human rights agency , whether they are under the UNO or not, has issued statements and continues to issue warnings about the religious and human rights violations taking place there. Amnesty International, the United States government through its state department and other agencies have clearly stated how degrading the situation Pakistan has created for its Ahmadi citizens.

It was a few decades ago that the President of Pakistan Ayyub Khan came for an official visit to the USA. At the airport, greeting him were President John F Kennedy, Mrs. Jackie Kennedy, Secretary of State Mr. Dean Rusk and many other US leaders. They were waiting for him to walk down the stairs from the PIA plane with a red carpet laid out for him. After visiting the Guard of Honor, a 21 gun salute was given in his honor. The streets of Washington DC were lined up on both sides with Americans waving Pakistani flags while he was cruising along President Kennedy in his glass top limousine waving back at them. President of USA gave him a state dinner which was unprecedented in the history of USA at Mount Vernon, the resting place of George Washington. To top it all off, he was requested to speak to the joint session of congress which he did. Pakistan was an honorable country and USA acknowledged it and honored its President at the time.

Today, Pakistan is a nuclear power which should have demanded much higher status, but it has no respect in USA or in any other place. You can imagine in a fairy tale that the president of USA would go to the airport to receive the president of Pakistan. This entire decline in its status has been brought by its own actions and Allah's decree that he gave to the Promised Messiah[as]: *Inni Muheeno Mun Irada Ihanataka*, that whoever would try to humiliate you, I will humiliate him.

Despite all evil efforts on part of Pakistan and some other nations, Jama'at Ahmadiyya under the leadership of its *Khalifa* is progressing every day. It is established in over 200 countries with its satellite programs through MTA reaching the corners of the earth. Allah is showing signs everywhere in the world that He is with this Jama'at and he is with Masroor who is its spiritual leader.

Marshall Islands sign of Senator Alik

Even in a small country in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, called Marshall Islands, the signs of support of Allah for this Jama'at have been seen and are apparent. It is a country which most people are not even aware of and is hard to find on the map. I am a witness to these signs and will only present you with just one of them. It is a sign that I have witnessed from the beginning until it came to a sorrowful end in February 2013.

A few years ago, in the Marshall Islands Parliament, Senator Alik who later became the Deputy Speaker of the House started a debate against Islam and it continued for three days. There were only a couple of families who were Ahmadi Muslims and no other Muslims were on that island. He said that Muslims are here and they are all terrorists and we should not let them establish themselves here. He also stated that they will eventually build a mosque here and he even gave a location which he thought was going to be the site of the mosque. Our Ahmadi members were not that knowledgeable because after they had accepted Islam and Ahmadiyyat, no missionary was assigned there and they did not get the proper education and training. They did not even know the *salaat* or that they had to fast in Ramadan, but they had a firm belief that they were Ahmadi Muslims and they believed in the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], that the Holy Qur'an was their book and that the Promised Messiah[as] had come. They responded to these false allegations and their statements were printed in the newspaper stating that they were peaceful Muslims because they were Ahmadis and have nothing to do with terrorists. I have no idea how Senator Alik came up with the suggestion of a mosque since there was no conversation or plans for it.

I was given the responsibility to build a mosque and visited there for the first time in May 2011. We had a few options on selecting

a site for the mosque. I found out later that we selected the same place which Senator Alik had warned the Senate about.

During this visit, I signed the lease for the land. Soon after signing the lease, we walked out of the attorney's office who was handling the legal documents. As we walked out, Senator Alik walked in to the attorney's office. One of our Ahmadi members told us that he was the senator who spoke against us in the Senate. We went back inside to see him and discovered a miracle. Allah had taken his voice from him. His health was normal and he stated that himself by writing on a pad since he could not speak anymore. He wrote down that he was going to the Philippines to get further treatment. We discovered this even when many people in the government did not know about it and discovered it right after the instance we signed up for the location of the mosque.

In July of 2011, it was the front page story that Senator Alik will not be running for the Senate in the November elections and he is leaving politics. In August, there was a session of parliament and he asked one of his staff members to read what he wanted to say since he could not speak anymore. Members of the Parliament objected and asked what kind of Speaker of the House they had who could not even speak. They demanded his resignation.

During my visit to Marshall Islands in September 2011, in addition to arranging for the construction of the mosque, through Humanity First we established the first computer training center to help the local people. The announcement of the opening of this center was in the newspaper while I was there before the opening, and on the same page, the story appeared of the resignation of Senator Alik from the Senate.

After the mosque was constructed, in September 2012, I took along with me the newly appointed missionary of Marshall Islands so

I could introduce him to Ahmadis as well as others that we had created friendships with. At breakfast at a local restaurant, we saw the brother of Senator Alik and invited him to join us. After a general conversation about Islam, I asked him about his brother because we had not heard anything about him for a year. He said that he did not go to Philippines but instead went to USA in Texas for treatment. He also told us that they cannot do anything for him but if you pray for him, I believe he could recover. It was only two days later that we met with the President of Marshall Islands in the President's Conference Room and introduced the Jama'at to him. He assured us that they take pride in their freedom of religion policy and if anything happens we should let him know.

It was fascinating to me that whenever some news came about Senator Alik, I was present in Marshall Islands. I was visiting there only every two to three months and for a few days at a time. On my visit there in February 2013, his brother came to the mosque the day after I arrived there. He told me that the next day his brother is going to die because they are going to pull off the life support systems. He was understandably upset and said that they are going to murder my brother. He wanted to bring his body to the Islands so he can have a big funeral which is an important ritual in the Marshallese culture but Alik's wife did not allow that and he was buried in Texas.

This is such a great sign how Allah took care of our enemy while providing us the opportunity to establish a mosque and a Jama'at and it is one of the signs to provide assurance to the small Ahmadiyya community there that Allah is with them.

"I am with you O' Masroor" and *Innallaha Ma'anaa*

While Allah keeps showing the signs for us in taking care of our enemies and brings them disgrace whether they are individuals or

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad
Khalifatul Masih V[aba]

governments, He keeps on showering honors on our *Khalifa* and the Jama'at.

One of the signs of Allah's support comes in the shape of the intensity of love of the members of the Jama'at for its *Khalifa* and the institution of *Khilafat*. By Allah's grace, we saw signs of this love, respect and obedience from the very first day of the fifth *Khalifa*.

Right after he was elected as the new *Khalifa* so many of us were all gathered on the street outside the Fazal Mosque in London. All we heard was his voice "sit down". We didn't know if he was addressing the people inside the mosque. In an amazing manner the whole crowd on the streets outside sat down in obedience to the newly elected *Khalifa*. It was a scene that no one planned or imagined but was a reflection of the love and obedience that Allah had already instilled in the hearts of the Ahmadis for their *Khalifa*.

Honors bestowed on Hudhur and Jama'at

Since that day, Allah has bestowed so many honors on Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V and his Jama'at. I could not possibly list all of them but will mention only a few:

Congress address 2012

On 27th June 2012, an historic event took place at Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V, addressed leading congressmen, senators, ambassadors, White House and State Department Staff, NGO leaders, religious leaders, professors, policy advisors, bureaucrats, members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of think-tanks and the Pentagon and journalists from the media. The meeting, the first of its kind, gave the opportunity to some of the most influential leaders in the United States, including Honorable Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic Leader

in the House of Representatives, to hear first-hand Islam's message on world peace. Following the event, Hudhur was given a tour of the Capitol Hill building, before being escorted to the House of Representatives where a Resolution was introduced in honor of his visit to the United States. The introductory paragraph of the Resolution stated:

"Welcoming His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, the worldwide spiritual and administrative head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, to Washington, DC, and recognizing his commitment to world peace, justice, nonviolence, human rights, religious freedom and democracy."

Honors in 2013 Visit to Los Angeles

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad delivered the keynote address at a special reception held in his honor at the Montage in Beverly Hills, CA on May 11, 2013.

More than 300 politicians, academics and community leaders attended, including the California Lieutenant Governor, mayoral candidate Eric Garcetti, and several members of the United States Congress.

During the event the Los Angeles City Council presented Hudhur with the golden key to the city, declaring:

"This Key is reserved for only the most honored people on Earth."

British Government honors for the Jama'at June 2013

An historic milestone is to be marked in the British Parliament for an Islamic community whose work the Prime Minister David Cameron said 'Britain can be proud of.'

Very historical event was held on Tuesday 11th June 2013 at the House of Commons, where a special reception was held in honor of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V.

This was a very high profile event and attended by six Cabinet Ministers, including the Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and the Home Secretary Theresa May, as well as 40 other parliamentarians and 30 other dignitaries.

Recently Hudhur addressed the European Parliament as well as the British Parliament giving them the true picture of Islam and how it is the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] who is the champion of peace for the whole world.

In 2016, Hudhur addressed the Canada Parliament and was given a reception by the Prime Minister of Canada.

Closing

Allah has promised and He will continue to defeat and dishonor the enemies of Jama'at while providing continued growth and success through our *Khulufah*. Hudhur and the Jama'at are being recognized as the voice for human rights, religious freedom and peace on the international scene. At the same time, the enemies of the Jama'at are being looked as violators of fundamental human rights, blatantly opposing religious freedom and becoming the producers of chaos and unrest in the world through preparing, protecting and producing terrorists.

I would like to give you a quote of Hudhur's speech of May 27, 2011 in which he explains this to the Jama'at in a humble manner, with humility, how Allah is our protector:

> "Now, in the fifth Ahmadiyya *Khilafat*, the force of envy and opposition is intense. Defenseless Ahmadis were cruelly attacked and their blood spilled in a manner that appeared to have been done by creatures worse than animals, let alone humans. In addition, by posing as sympathetic to the Community, in some places internal efforts have been made to create discord. However, in accordance with God's promise, the *Khilafat* that is divinely supported has been contending with it. In fact it is God Who is contending with it."

Hudhur added: "I am a weak and useless person, I have no influence. However, Ahmadiyya *Khilafat* has the support and help of that God Who is All-Powerful and He promised the Promised Messiah[as] that He will show His Mighty Power and He is doing so, indeed will continue to do so and the enemy will always fail in his plots and schemes."

As the members of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at we should know that Allah will always be with us. When the enemies are nearby and we can hear their footsteps just as the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] experienced, we should repeat the same words; the words that our Khalifa keeps on repeating to us. We should repeat these words to each other and to the whole world. It does not matter if we say it in Arabic, English or Urdu or any other language. They are the same soothing and comforting words full of faith, conviction and strength that were spoken in the cave over fourteen hundred years ago by our beloved Prophet Muhammad[sa];

Innallaha Ma'anaa, God is with us.

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Path to Allah:

15: Blessing of financial sacrifice
16: Domestic Harmony
17: *Siraat-e Mustaqeem* - The Straight Path

15: Blessings of Financial Sacrifice

Instinct and quest of human beings to be good

All human beings have an instinctive desire to be good. Not only we would like to be good persons but we would like it acknowledged by others. This leaves the issue of the definition of a good person. For centuries humans have been debating over this. Some feel that as long as you do not harm anyone, do not steal anything, you are a good person. Some others describe the goodness in religious terms or philosophical terms and set the bar very high.

Various religions also have come up with different definitions. In the religious terminology the terms, 'righteous' and 'God-fearing' are used interchangeably with a 'good' person. The Holy Qur'an also describes who can claim to be a good person. I will give you one quotation that summarizes the qualities of a good person. It should, however, be noted that at all the places where the Holy Qur'an has given a description of a good or a righteous person, it always includes the quality of financial sacrifice for the sake of God. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah says:

> "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but truly righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Book and the Prophets, and spends his money for love of Him, on the kindred and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask for charity, and for ransoming the captives; and who observes Prayer and pays the Zakat; and those who fulfill their promise when they have made one, and the patient in poverty and afflictions and the steadfast in time of war; it is these who have proved truthful and it is these who are the God-fearing."[1]

The financial sacrifice that Allah has described here specifically requires spending for the love of God for His creatures. The intention of spending is specified so it rules out any spending that

one may do for the sake of getting favors, political gains or other ulterior motives.

The next question that the Holy Qur'an deals is in relation to how much should be spent in the way of Allah. How would we know that whatever amount we spend for the love of God qualifies to make us a good or righteous person? Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

> *"Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love; and whatever you spend, Allah surely knows it well."*[2]

According to this verse, without spending in the cause of God, we cannot claim ourselves to be a good person, no matter how many other qualities we may have. This quality has been described as the essential part of a good person. If a person worships God by saying his prayers, fasts in the month of Ramadhan according to God's commandments and does not harm anyone and is polite and nice to anyone, but does not spend in the way of Allah, he cannot be considered a good person in the eyes of Allah. If you have a structure that has walls, floor, windows and doors but has no roof, it cannot be called a house because it is lacking an essential part of what makes a structure a house. It may look like one and have most of its qualities but it will never be considered a house.

The next question that arises after reading this particular verse is: how do we know that what we spend is from "that which we love"? One may have a savings account, a checking account, cash in his pocket or other property but one does not designate that a particular account he loves and the other he does not.

The simple way to determine would be to see what happens when something or someone that we love departs from us. If it is something we love, it hurts us when it departs. The intensity of our

love for that person or thing dictates how hurtful we feel upon losing it. So when we spend the money in the way of Allah and the hurt it causes shows that we gave something we loved. If we give a small amount and it has no effect on our feeling and makes no difference to us in our way of living, then it is not from what we love.

How the wealth should be spent

We have restrictions placed upon us how to spend our wealth. Government, for example, puts restriction on our spending through taxation. As long as we pay our tax obligations, it gives us the freedom of spending our money the way we choose to do it. There are ways that it tries to entice us in certain direction but those choices are still at our discretion.

There are conflicts between individual desires and goals of the society. There is pressure on an individual to sacrifice the individual desires over the betterment of the society we live in.

The religion of Islam does not just charge us a tax and leave the rest to us without guiding us. Allah has dictated in the Holy Qur'an how we should and how we should not spend our money.

When we go to the grocery store, Allah has told us not to spend our money on alcohol and pork for example. We are also told not to waste our money in gambling. On the other hand we are told to spend on our family, help the needy, the poor and spend for the betterment of the society in general.

One of the reasons that we don't want to spend or give in the way of Allah is that we would like to leave our property to our heirs. We would like to provide our children protection and make their lives easier and provide for them for their future.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an in discussing the inheritance rules:

> *"Your fathers and your children, you know not which of them is nearest to you in benefit."*[3]

What this verse tells us is that there is no guarantee and assurance that your offspring would be to your benefit. There is no assurance that they would spend your wealth the way you intended it.

Because of my profession, I come across many rich people and get to know their personal lives. There was a person who would be considered a rich man from all standards, owner of a business, having property and a healthy income stream. He was having lot of problems with one of his sons. He would have to leave meetings and be embarrassed because he would have to go to the police station when his son would be arrested. One day I asked him why was he having so many problems with his son. He told me that his son is young and has too much money. He is driving expensive cars and wasting money on alcohol, drugs etc. and just gets in trouble. So I asked him why you let him have all this money. He said, "I don't. The money he got was given to him through a trust that his grandfather set up." It is called a generation skipping trust. The father cannot touch the money and goes directly to the grandchildren when they reach 18 years of age.

I was thinking that when his grandfather set up the trust, his thought process would have been that he is taking care of the needs of his grandchildren so they would be able to get their education and live happy and comfortable lives. He did not know that the document he was signing could be the death warrant for his grandson. It was only three or four years later that the boy could not handle the wealth he inherited and committed suicide.

Holy Qur'an's guarantee of protection of our children.

In the Holy Qur'an, in *Surah Kahf*, Allah has related a story of a prophet (*Hazrat Khizr*[as]) who was set to go to travel upon His command. Prophet Moses[as] asked him if he could join him on this journey. He agreed on one condition that whatever he does, Moses[as] would not question him otherwise he would not be able to accompany him anymore.

At one place, they arrived at a village and asked for food. It was a custom in those days for the villagers to provide food to the travelers moving through the village since there were no hotels and restaurants. The people in that village were rude and would not give them food. There they came across a wall that was about to fall down. The prophet told Moses[as] that they needed to fix the wall so it is stabilized again. They proceeded to do that. Moses[as] questioned him and said why did they had to do it especially when the people did not even offer food and at least he could have charged them labor for fixing the wall.

At this point he explained to Moses[as] why he had done different things on his journey. About this particular instance he explained that he was commanded to fix the wall by Allah because it belonged to two orphans and their father had left them inheritance which was buried under the wall. It needed to be protected until they were old enough to take control of it otherwise the villagers would have snatched it away. And then he gave the reason why Allah commanded him to do that for these particular boys. He said:

..."their father had been **a *righteous man***".[4]

The verse does not say anything about these boys whether they

were also righteous or not. It only had to do with their father who was a good man and Allah guarantees the protection of children of the good and righteous persons.

In this regard, there is a saying of Prophet David[as] recorded in the Book of Talmud. He said, "I used to be young but now I am an old man, but I have never seen the children of a good *(Saleh)* person to go hungry."

Promise of Allah for returns

Allah has promised returns of 7 times and 70 times to the people who spend in the way of God. It must be noted that 7 or 70 is used in the Holy Qur'an just as we use 10 or 100 times. These are not absolute values but indicate multiple returns. Allah in fact has returned the sacrifices hundreds of thousands of times in short periods of time.

Allah also has pointed out another fact that is related to the returns. The level of sacrifice is directly related to the level of righteousness and certainty that Allah's promise is true. Allah says that the sacrifice of the people spending in the way of Allah and sacrificing before the victory cannot be equal to the ones spending after the victory.[5] The companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] who believed in Allah and His prophet without any visible signs of success or victory gave sacrifices that are in the eyes of Allah much greater than the ones who were spending after the victory of Mecca.

We are living in the times when Islam is in dire need and people who sacrifice now without seeing any obvious signs of the eventual spiritual victory of Islam would certainly be regarded with much more regard than the people who come after us and would see the victory.

Financial sacrifice among companions of Holy Prophet[sa]

There are examples in the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] who acted and provided the financial sacrifices. We all know about the sacrifice of Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] who brought all his belongings for the sake of Allah. Hazrat Omar[ra] who offered half of everything he had at the disposal of the Holy Prophet[sa].

Hazrat Abu Talha Ansari[ra] was a wealthy companion and owned many date orchards around Medina. One of his orchards was named *Buhaira* and was very close to the Prophet's Mosque. It was his best orchard because it produced the best dates and its well had crisp and delicious water. Holy Prophet[sa] would go there often and drink from the well, rest there and try its dates. When the verse was revealed: "*Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love,"* he came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and said, "O prophet of Allah, according to this verse, we must give what we love the most. My most loved possession as you know is the orchard *Buhaira* and I would like to give it away for the sake of Allah and hope that Allah would grant me a place in paradise." Holy Prophet[sa] was so pleased to hear that because it was the true spirit of the verse. I believe that it was the best business deal he ever made in his life.

The Holy Prophet[sa] directed him to give it away to some of his relatives who were not as well off. So he gave it to his cousins from his father's side.[6]

Companions of Promised Messiah[as]

We have similar examples in our Jama'at among the companions of the Promised Messiah[as] also. Hazrat Hakim Nooruddin Khalifatul Masih I[ra] who provided everything at the disposal of the Promised Messiah[as]. The words of the Promised Messiah[as] about him reflect

the superiority of the righteousness and complete submission to any request that was made of him.
On a personal note, I can provide the example of my grandfather Mian Imamuddin[ra] and his two brothers.

These days there is much interest about reality shows on TV. The fact is that we have reality shows in our families going on for the last hundred years with amazing scenes. We just need to look at our forefathers, how they sacrificed and how Allah has returned according to His promises thousands of times even millions of times. And that is only in two generations.

Promised Messiah[as] announced that money was needed to finish the construction of the Minaret in Qadian. If one hundred people would give 100 rupees each, that would be enough money to complete the project. He also announced that the names of such person would be carved on the minaret so the coming generations would see their names and pray for them. My grandfather along with his two brothers went to the Promised Messiah[as] and said that they could not afford to pay 100 rupees each but they have discussed it and the three brothers and their father combined could come up with the hundred rupees and they requested that it be accepted because they truly want to participate in the project.

Promised Messiah[as] very kindly accepted their offer as an exception and all four names are carved on the minaret. Promised Messiah[as] knew them and he knew with certainty that they do not have 100 rupees each otherwise they would have given it away in the cause of Allah. Promised Messiah[as] at another occasion said about these three brothers that they have brought everything they had for the cause of Allah just like Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] and have fulfilled their obligations of the *Bait*.

It had nothing to do with how much was given but the desired spirit

was there to sacrifice for the cause of Allah. It had nothing to do with the good times or the bad times, recession or inflation. If you look at their generation now, Allah has multiplied millions of times those 25 rupees each that they gave.

This is reality TV that no one can match.

Sacrifice must continue at all times

The concept of sacrifice that the Holy Qur'an presents is of a continual basis. Prophet Abraham[as] is quoted in the Holy Qur'an as praying in the words *Arina Manasakina*, "Show us the ways we can sacrifice for you". Before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Prophet Abraham[as] provided the best level of sacrifices in the way of Allah. His request from Allah was to keep him showing how he could continue to sacrifice for Him.

The concept that has been described to us that what we spend in the way of Allah is what we really save because it is recorded in our names and our return is the acceptance and pleasure of Allah on the Day of Judgment.

It is related that the Holy Prophet[sa] had sacrificed a goat and its meat was being distributed. The Holy Prophet[sa] came home in the afternoon and asked his wife Hazrat Ayesha[ra] how the distribution was going. She answered that everything is gone and that she was able to save only one leg. The Holy Prophet[sa] said, "Ayesha, you should have said that we saved everything except one leg." [7]

The principle that the Holy Prophet[sa] so wisely explained is that what we use in this world is consumed and finished but what we gave in the way of Allah is saved in our name for which we will collect the rewards from Allah.

Conclusion:

In the difficult economic times, it is tempting to forego our responsibilities about spending in the way of Allah. People are afraid and concerned about the future and their financial security.

There are two things that need to be remembered:

Allah does not burden a soul more than it can bear to handle. We are not asked to give beyond our capacity at any point. Place after place Allah repeats in the Holy Qur'an that we should give from what Allah has provided us. It is not the amount but the spirit of trying to please Allah, to spend for the love of Him. Whatever we have as Allah described in the verse I have quoted above, He knows what we are spending, and if it is from that which we love then we have fulfilled our responsibility and we certainly would be counted as righteous or a good person in the eyes of Allah.

As members of the Ahmadiyya Community, we should know that our protection is under the revelation that was given to the Promised Messiah[as] in the words *Inni Uhafizu kulla mun fiddar*. We all have seen on TV and newspapers a few years ago that there was no protection in the retirement accounts and investments that people had gathered for decades. It all came to nothing in a short period of time. As members of this Jama'at, we are provided the protection by Allah. Promised Messiah[as] explained this in the following words:

> *"...whoever fully lives up to my teaching, he alone enters that house of mine with reference to which God Almighty has promised. Inni Uhafizu kulla mun fiddar "I shall Myself protect all those who are in this house." It should not, however, be understood here that this Divine protection is extended only to those living within the compass of my house made of mud and bricks: the pledge also encompasses*

those who follow my teaching to the fullest extent, and who, therefore, can truly be said to be the inmates of my spiritual home."[8]

In order for us to be counted as a good person in the eyes of Allah, our financial sacrifice must be part of the good acts we perform. We must prepare ourselves when we would be presented to our Lord and whatever actions and deeds we have sent for the Day of Judgment would be accounted for. We need to make sure that what we have sent forth is valuable, to the best of our capacities and is of the highest value. Promised Messiah[as] has brought this to our attention in the following words:

"Strive therefore to the utmost that not a jot or syllable of the Holy Qur'an should bear witness against you, and cause you to be apprehended on that account. For, indeed, even a single grain of evil is punishable. The time is very short, the mission of your life not yet fulfilled. Walk with speed, for the evening draws nigh. Whatever you have to put before the Lord, examine it well, and as often as you can, lest some defect remain to cause irreparable loss; or lest you take something with you which in fact should amount to no more than filthy and spurious goods, not worthy to be presented at a royal court."[9]

References

1. Holy Qur'an 2:178
2. Holy Qur'an 3:93
3. Holy Qur'an 4:12
4. Holy Qur'an 18:83
5. Holy Qur'an 57:11
6. Bokhari, Hadith 33, Wills and Testaments
7. Tirmadhi , Sifatuz Ziafat, Chapter 36, hadith 2658
8. Kishti Nooh, Ruhani Khazain Vol 19, Page 10
9. Kishti Nooh, Ruhani Khazain Vol. 19, p. 26

16: Domestic Harmony

"Those who believe and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah because it is only in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find peace."[1] In other words, without God, there can be no peace or harmony. Man cannot live at peace with himself nor can peace be vouchsafed for society without this guideline. It is only the love of God which can bring about true respect for His creation. This is the ultimate Islamic philosophy. Without returning to God, one cannot attain peace, and without that peace, peace in society cannot be built. All human efforts to create peace from selfish ulterior motives are bound to fail and come to nothing. If there is no God, there is no peace.

Islam is a complete way of life. It considers the family to be the corner stone of Islamic society. It bases the atmosphere in the family on sacrifice, love, loyalty, and obedience. When we say "family," we mean the traditional definition of it, namely husband, wife, and children. Grandparents are also part of the extended Muslim family and play a very important role. By following this order, we can live in peace. One of the main components for peace is domestic harmony. In order to achieve domestic harmony, Muslims must turn to Allah and the Holy Qur'an. To establish domestic harmony, there are three main issues that need to be addressed. They are: husband/wife relations, treatment and love for children, and respect for parents and relatives.

Allah says: "And among His signs is this that He created for you mates from your own species, that you may live in harmony with them receiving comfort from each other, and He has induced mutual love and tenderness in your hearts for each other. Verily in this are signs for those who reflect."[2]

To establish and maintain domestic harmony, both husband and wife together have to play equally important roles. In the Holy Qur'an it states, "They are a garment for you, and you are a

garment for them."[3] Islam requires that a husband and wife should be as garments for each other. Just as garments are for protection, comfort, show and concealment for human beings, Allah expects husbands and wives to be the same for one another. There is a *hadith* that says "Man being the head of the family has the authority over his house, and he shall stand accountable (in front of God) how he treated and took care of the members of his family. And woman is the authority in the house of her husband over the children and she shall be questioned (by God) about them."[4] This *hadith* illustrates that husband and wife are given equally important roles and will both be judged by Allah accordingly. Therefore, there should never be the notion that either the husband or the wife has higher obligations to Allah. Both are expected to fulfill their rights and their duties to Allah.

However, there are special duties for a husband and special duties for a wife. The special instructions for the husband are: treat her well by being her best friend in a lifelong relationship; discharge all the obligations towards her with a liberal heart, look after her physical needs such as food, clothing, adornments, shelter, and health; take care of all her emotional needs, respect, love privacy, procreativity, and happiness in general; help to accomplish her special and unique personal needs (for example, things she likes most, good things in which she may excel); and caring for her close relatives and friends. The good treatment of the wife is one of the commandments of Allah given in the Holy Qur'an. "And deal/live/socialize with them in a good (*ma'roof*) manner."[5] The Holy Prophet[sa] has said, "The best among you is he who is best towards his wife, and I am the best example among you all."[6] In the Holy Qur'an, Allah has stated that the man is the guardian over the woman. This means that the husbands are leaders, not dictators. A husband's duty is to protect his wife from all manners of harms, including physical, emotional, intellectual, financial, moral, social, and most of all spiritual. The statement that men are a degree

above women means that authority within the household has been given to the husband in preference to the wife because a heavier burden has been placed on his shoulders by another verse of the Holy Qur'an, which says: "Men are guardians over women because Allah has made some of them excel others, and because they (men) spend of their wealth."[7]

The Promised Messiah[as] always stressed the importance of being a good husband. He, himself, was exceedingly conscious of his duty as a husband. He told his followers, "Your wives are the first witnesses of your moral and spiritual caliber and your relationship between you and God. A man who is not honorable and kind to his wife, how can he possibly be good to other people? You must first of all be good to your wives."[8]

Allah has also given explicit instructions for the wives as well. The special Qur'anic instructions for the wives are: love and obedience towards the husband; content of heart with thanks and gratitude; honor and respect for the husband; *purdah* and chastity; safeguarding the property, home, wealth and belongings of the husband; cleanliness and modesty; and adornment and beautification for her husband. In the Holy Qur'an it states, "So, virtuous women are those who are obedient (to Allah) and guard their own chastity as well as the rights and secrets of their husbands with Allah's protection."[9] In the relationship between husband and wife, a wife's role entails pleasing her husband. A *hadith* says: "The woman who dies in such a state that her husband is fully happy and content with her, will certainly enter Paradise."[10] One of the duties of a wife is to safeguard the property, home and belongings of the husband. The Holy Prophet[sa] once said: "How excellent are the women of the tribe of Quraish! They are most affectionate towards their children and most efficient guardians of their husband's homes."[11]

Unfortunately, there are always circumstances that can lead to domestic problems. The first set of problems is emotional. Stress, anxiety, resentment, moodiness, withholding emotions, distrust, depression and anger are all causes of serious problems between husband and wife. These should be avoided or should be corrected by any means necessary. The next set of problems is financial. Issues may occur when there are too many expenses, too much materialism, miserliness in spending, job loss, less income or no income at all. The last but most important, issue is better communication. Sometimes in marriages, there is no sense of communication at all. Other times there is vague communication which can lead to misunderstandings. Non-verbal communication is one of the most difficult issues. Instead of listening to the words, one is focused on the tone of voice and/or facial and hand gestures. The key to all of these issues is communication. A husband and wife should be able to easily express their thoughts and emotions. Good and active listening is required. We all can hear the words that come from someone, but to listen is a totally different story. Husband and wives need to take the time out and understand what the spouse is trying to express. And for communication, feedback is also essential. After listening to what the other has to say, reassure them with your thoughts and feelings.

The relationship between husband and wife is long-lasting. The Promised Messiah[as] expressed what marriage is when he wrote a letter to a friend whose wife had just died. He said: "Marriage is such a bond of human relationship that one is unable to be away from one's wife for more than a few weeks. Husband and wife are so much together, share so much of each other that they become part of each other. With the blessings of marital relationship worldly worries and trials are forgotten. The impressions and memories of marriage are so deep that, when one's wife dies, one cannot remember this relationship without tears. God has reminded us constantly about this mutual love and loyalty in marriage. It is the

fountainhead of all human relationship."[12]

I am going to present two quotations from the Promised Messiah[as]. This is his advice for both men and women.

This first quotation is in regards to men:

"Sometimes, by chance, I address my wife with a little bit of harshness. My whole body starts trembling. God has given under my care a person from hundreds of miles away and I may have committed a sin by my behavior. So, I say to her that she should pray for me in her *Salat* that if my actions were against the will of God that He may forgive me. I am tremendously afraid that I might be committing an act of cruelty. So, I hope that all of you will also behave accordingly. Our beloved Holy Prophet[sa] was so kind to his wives. What more can I write on this?"[13]

This next quotation is for the women:

"God has placed two responsibilities on every human being. One is Rights of Allah and the other is Rights of His Creation. The "rights of His creations" are further divided in two categories. One is obedience of parents and the other is taking care of the other creations. Under the same rule, it is incumbent upon a woman to serve and obey her parents, husband, and her father and mother-in-law. How unfortunate is a woman who by not serving these individuals rejects both the rights of creations and the rights of Allah. I have stated rights of Allah because it is a violation of the commandment of Allah when she does not fulfil her obligations."[14]

The relationship between the husband and wife is just as important as their relationship with their children. In the Holy Qur'an, it illustrates how parents need to raise their children. It requires parents to be extremely careful in the upbringing of the children. It says: "And remember when Luqman[as] said to his son while exhorting him, 'O my dear son! Associate not partners with Allah.

Surely, associating partners with God is a grievous wrong.'"[15] The Holy Qur'an explicitly states what a child should be taught. "O my dear son! Observe prayer, and enjoin good, and forbid evil, and endure patiently whatever may befall thee. Surely, this is of those matters which require firm resolve."[16] The Holy Qur'an continues to say that parents need to stress to children that modesty is the way of life, not arrogance. It even explains that children should be taught to speak in low voices.

Although parents have a right and duty over their children, they must still be loving and comforting towards the children. The Promised Messiah[as] used to stress the role of a parent. With his own children, he was always an indulgent, but caring parent. He would say: The prayers of parents for their children and children for their parents are always pleasing to God. Children should be guided by good example and they should not be punished physically. He further stated: Fathers who beat their children were putting themselves alongside God and thus were guilty of a kind of polytheism, believing they shared Allah's attributes of being a true and absolute Guide. Those who pushed their children unwillingly in a certain direction, believing they were masters of their children's destinies, were guilty of the same sin. Because the Promised Messiah[as] was so kind and caring, children were at ease with him. They climbed on his lap and told him their nursery tales of frogs, crows and animals. He told them stories, too. They treated him as a companion. One of his wife's friends often stayed with them for a month. Her little daughter occasionally amused herself by coming into his room and fanning him as he worked. One day she found it more interesting to sit by the window. She told him, "Come and sit over here. It's easier for me." The Promised Messiah[as] duly got up and sat where she had directed.

There is another incidence where the Promised Messiah[as] had some small stones and pieces of pottery in his pocket. One companion

asked him if he wanted him to discard them. The Promised Messiah[as] said that his son Mahmud was playing with these and asked him to hold these for him. He considered it "*Imanat"* or trust. He said what would he answer if his son asked for this thing and he did not have them.

The family is the foundation of Islamic society. The peace and security offered by a stable family unit is greatly valued and seen as essential for the spiritual growth of its members. A harmonious social order is created by the existence of extended families. As children are treasured, so should the parents and relatives.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "The Lord has decreed that you worship none save Him alone, and behave beneficently towards parents. If either or both of them should attain old age while you are alive, say not 'ugh' to them, nor chide them, and speak kindly to them. Lower to them the wing of humility out of tenderness and pray: Lord have mercy upon them as they brought me up when I was little."[17]

This verse is most significant on the subject of treatment of parents. After the unity of God, human beings should, through their attitude of love, affection, and kindness, give priority over all other things to their parents who have reached an old and difficult age. Further, the verse speaks of the situations when the behavior of one or both of the parents becomes extremely trying and sometimes offensive. In response to that, not even a mild expression of disgust or disapproval should pass one's lips. On the contrary, they should be treated with profound respect.

A man named Abdul Karim went to the Promised Messiah[as] and complained of the attention he had to give his mother now that she was old and frail. The Promised Messiah[as] told him that he had a sacred duty to love and respect his mother. He recalled the saying

of Prophet Muhammad[sa] that there were two especially unlucky people. The first was the person who had the opportunity to fast in the month of Ramadan and did not do so, and so allowed the holy month to go past without his sins being forgiven. The other unlucky person was he whose parents were alive and who did not serve them with devotion and obedience. In fact, the Promised Messiah[as] would stress in his sermons the importance of love and respect to parents and family.

His constant admonition to his followers that they must be humble, truthful and generous resulted in many people joining the Ahmadiyya community because they had been so impressed by the actions of one of his followers. The first sermon that a man called Umar Din heard stressed the duties owed to relatives. He felt it applied totally to himself and when he returned to his home in Kashmir, he gave back to his brother the share in a property which he had seized from his brother for a long time. This respect and love is not only due to one's own parents, but to the parents of the spouse as well. The Holy Prophet[sa]'s own parents and grandparents had died while he was still a child. The parents of some of his wives were, however, alive and he always treated them with great consideration and respect.

On the occasion of the surrender of Mecca when the Holy Prophet[sa] entered the town as a victorious general, Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], his father-in-law, brought his father (Hazrat Aisha's grandfather) to meet him. The Holy Prophet[sa] said to Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra]: "Why did you trouble your father to come to me? I would have gladly gone to him myself."[17A]

The Promised Messiah[as] always reminded that "Paradise lies under the feet of mothers." In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] used to explain to people that there are three sins which nullify all other virtues:

One—Ascribing partners with Allah.
Two—Disobedience to parents.
Three—Fleeing from Jihad.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] wrote in his book Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues about a story of a boy watching his father take care of the grandfather. Once, he observed with much pain and unease the ill-treatment of his grandfather at the hands of his father who was gradually transferred from a well-provided and comfortable main bedroom to a smaller and less convenient accommodation until it was finally decided to remove the grandfather to the servant's quarters. During an exceptionally severe winter, the grandfather complained of his room being too chilly and his quilt being too thin to make him feel warm and comfortable. The father started looking for an extra blanket from a stock of old, useless rags. Observing this, the child turned to his father and requested: "Please do not give all the rags to grandpa. Keep some for me so that I may be able to give them to you when you grow old." Parents must remember that we must live by example for our children.

The way we treat our parents will be the same way our children treat us. Even after the parents pass on from this world, the children still owe a duty to them.

The Holy Prophet[sa] said that there are four duties to fulfill when parents die.

One—Pray for Allah's forgiveness for them and call down
His blessings upon them.
Two—Carry out whatever they undertook to do.
Three—Honor their friends.
Four—Strengthen the ties of kinship with those who are related to you through them. [17B]

Hazrat Abu Hurairah[ra] narrates that the Holy Prophet[sa] said that when a person died, his period of activity was over. But there were three things which remain benefiting him even after his death: 1) lasting act of welfare; 2) his knowledge beneficial to people; and 3) his/her righteous children who pray to Allah for his/her deliverance and forgiveness. So, it should be remembered that it is every Muslim's duty to serve, love and respect the parents even after they have passed from this world.[18]

The message that is given to a couple first starting out their family at the time of their wedding: "O ye believers! Fear God, and say things straightforward in all matters in life; He will reform your conduct and forgive your sins."[19]

There are two fundamental reasons why the Holy Prophet[sa] chose these verses to be read to the newly married couple. These verses are essential for ultimate domestic harmony and a content life. The first fundamental reason is when it says "say things straightforward in all matters in life." One must always speak the truth. However, this saying goes one step beyond telling the truth. We need to speak the truth without any hidden meanings. To talk straightforward means that you shouldn't leave any room for misunderstandings or misconceptions. The second fundamental reason is that the verse emphasizes fear of God and forgiveness of sins. With everything in our lives, Allah is our witness and will judge us accordingly. This verse is reminding us of this very subject and if we allow our conduct to follow this guidance, then we can attain domestic harmony. Without the recognition of Allah and the Day of Judgement, we cannot pursue peace or harmony in our families. May Allah help us all to follow His guidelines to achieve peace and harmony in our domestic and spiritual lives and may our humility be a source of forgiveness in the eyes of Allah. Ameen.

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17: *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem*, The Straight Path

Surah *Fatiha* is the essence of the Holy Qur'an. Our obligatory prayers are not complete without reciting this *Surah* (chapter). It is noteworthy that in this *Surah* there is only one thing that we are taught to pray for and that is "Guide us to the right path or *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem*."

One of the beauties of the Qur'an is that when it states something and we have a question in regards to it, we do not need to look elsewhere. It provides all the answers within it. When we are told that we should pray so we can walk on the straight path, the question arises: What is the right path? The Holy Qur'an immediately qualifies it and defines it. It says it is the path of those people who were rewarded by Allah. It further clarifies and warns what this path is not. It says it is not the path of those who earned God's wrath and neither of those who went astray.

So in the same verse, it has told us what to watch for and what to avoid in our daily lives in order to achieve this goal of walking in the right path towards God.

It is very clear that in our daily lives we have choices. Our behavior in different roles can be modified with what our goals and objectives are. It should be understood that the teachings of the Qur'an are for making our choices in our behavior so we progress spiritually. Islam does not want us to sit in some corner of a cave or go to the jungle and spend our life repeating some prayers and psalms and think that it will get us towards God. It is our good works in the normal routine life in this world that will decide how we behaved and how in every action we had God as our Guide and it was His pleasure that was our goal. Therefore we reject the notion that we should get away from the responsibilities of life and be a monk in the wilderness and seek God.

In our daily lives we make decisions about our behavior as a father,

mother, son, daughter, teacher, student, husband, wife, employer, employee, friend, neighbor, coworker etc. It is our duty that at every action we take, we judge for ourselves that the action being taken is in line with the path of those who were rewarded by God or are we taking this action because other factors around us have affected us. It is possible that the society around us is made up of people who have earned the wrath of God and therefore we must avoid that action. It is something that we must watch for every moment of our lives and be conscious of this distinction if we are to follow the right path and be also among the people who were rewarded by God. There is absolutely nothing wrong with earning the wealth of this world or to be successful in business or make progress in a worldly sense as long as we have the real objective in mind. The wealth of this world can be helpful in achieving our goal of earning the pleasure of Allah if we follow His commandments while we are earning it.

The Promised Messiah[as] has very clearly and plainly explained this principle in the following quote:

'Nobody should interpret that a person should not have any concern or connection with the worldly affairs. I do not mean this. And Allah does not prohibit us from earning the worldly wealth. Islam has prohibited aloofness and seclusion from the world. That is for the cowards. If a believer's relationship with the world is extensive, it becomes a means of elevation of his status because his goal and focus is his religion. The world and his wealth and power are subservient to his faith. So the fact of the matter is that the world must not be the object by itself. The earning of worldly wealth should be for the service of the religion. As a person traveling from one place to another gathers means of a ride and money to be spent on the way, his main goal is to get to his destination not the ride and the necessities of his travel. Same way a person should earn worldly wealth but considering it to be for the service of his religion"[1]

In order for us to judge our actions in everyday life in accordance with the actions of the rewarded people, the question arises: who are these rewarded people? Again the Holy Qur'an provides the answer; it states:

"And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger of His shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings, namely, the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs and the Righteous or pious (*Saliheen*). And excellent companions are these."[2]

On the top of the list are the prophets of God. The most high and spiritually supreme is the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. So we could follow his example. He is described as the personified Qur'an, which means that he followed the commandments of God in their entirety as they applied to all phases of his life. We may try to imitate him but we know that it is not possible to achieve that status. However we could try to the best of our abilities and no matter what level we achieve, we will be rewarded for the effort.

Some people have a problem with that. There are over 700 commandments in the Holy Qur'an. We know that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] followed them but how can we do that? Before we even attempt to act upon them just trying to get the knowledge of all the commandments is a task by itself.

There are two ways to address this issue. Firstly, all the commandments do not apply to every one of us. Some commandments are for men and not for women, some are for parents, some are for children, some are for the rulers and powerful and some are for the week and poor. Regardless of how difficult it is to have knowledge of them and then try to act upon them, the Holy Qur'an has taught us an easy way.

In *Surah Luqman* Allah says:

"And in spiritual matters follow the way of him who turns to Me."[3]

It simply means that when it is time for prayers and you are asked to do so and your friend is inviting you to go to the game or watch TV or just gossip, you should follow the one that will lead you to God.

The other way to address the issue is that the basic commandments do not need higher education and academic discussions. As a matter of fact, Allah has stated that the knowledge of basic good and evil is inherent in every soul. In *Surah Ash-Shams*, Allah has described the sequence of creation of the universe. How the sun was created and then the moon, the earth, the atmosphere and finally the soul was created. Then Allah says that He revealed to the soul what is good and what is evil. So this basic knowledge is factory built. We sometimes refer to it as our conscience. When we do some good deed, our conscience praises us and we feel good and when we do something wrong, it makes us feel that we have done something wrong. That is when we try to pacify it and try to justify our actions and argue with our conscience, but deep down we know that we have done wrong.

Basic commandments such as speaking the truth, being honest, showing modesty, not stealing other's property have existed in all the religions. It is essential that in order for us to advance spiritually to be among the rewarded people that we avoid these mistakes by not following the people who earned God's wrath.

It should also be understood that God's wrath is not only on the people who do some heinous crimes against God. The basic commandment of telling the truth is an example. When a person lies, he earns the wrath of God. Allah says that His curse is upon the

liars. We live in a society in which lying is Ok if it cannot be caught. Under this thinking we find individuals lying in so many aspects of their lives. Some lie to hurt the other's feelings. Spouses lie about each other when they are fighting over a divorce case and it actually gets established that they were outright lying. So what have they accomplished? They have earned the curse of Allah. Regardless of how their egos were satisfied and how painful they made it for the other party; the fact is that they earned the wrath of God and they followed the path of those people against which Allah had warned us. Same holds true in business deals in which for a small amount, individuals earn the wrath of God by lying. Look around in our society and you will find how the truth is twisted and misrepresented and without any care about the displeasure of God. The politicians and attorneys work hard to come up with sentences in a manner that the truth gets muddy. They can come back and argue that it was not what they meant. They work hard in confusing the common definition of words, again to suppress the truth. However, in the Holy Qur'an we are plainly told to tell the truth. You do not need to be a scholar to understand this commandment.

We need to focus on this instruction of God that when someone is trying to encourage us to lie about anything, we must not follow him because it is the path of those people who have in the past and will in the future earn the wrath and curse of God.

There are very simple commandments of God that are ignored by the people who have gone astray. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

> "He it is Who has made for you the night that you may rest therein, and the day illuminating."[4]

It is such a simple thing that most people just read it and do not realize the wisdom and potential of goodness in the society related to it.

Just think about how much crime is committed in the nighttime as compared to the daytime. Whether it is drinking alcohol, use of drugs, theft, robbery, murder, looting, adultery, prostitution or any other sinful crime, you will find that it takes place at night at a level that it has no comparison with daytime. Look at how the bars are closed in the morning and then as the evening comes they start to open and in the middle of night they are all full. If the people were resting at night as God intended, most of these sinful activities will go away.

It is not just a theory. You can compare the societies where people go to sleep early and see how little crime there is. We make fun of the small towns in USA where it gets dark at 8PM because everyone goes to sleep. But, that is where the crime is at a minimum or non-existent. It is in line with the understanding of the Holy Prophet[sa] who had instructed that we should go to sleep after *Isha salat* (evening prayer) instead of gossiping and having parties.

Again we need to be aware and make our judgment as to who we should follow; the person who wants to gossip all night with us so we can't get up for our *Fajr salat* (morning prayer) or the one who tells us to rest at night as Allah had intended for us.

Allah has given us the guidance regarding this by addressing the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]:

Say, "If you love Allah, follow me: *then* will Allah love you and forgive you your faults. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful."[5]

Getting back to the categories of people who are rewarded by Allah and whom we are to watch are the Prophets, the Truthful, Martyrs and the Righteous.

The Holy Prophet[sa] has said: I am going to leave behind two things.

If you will stick to these you would never go astray from the religion: the Book of Allah and the *Sunna* (practices) of His Prophet."

The guidance for us can be sought always from:
The Holy Qur'an
The *Sunna* and *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet[sa]
The Promised Messiah's books and writings and
The *Khulufah* of the Promised Messiah[as].

We may not have any prophets living among us but we always have pious people among us**.** Allah has made sure that we always have pious people to follow. It is true for other religions also. The Holy Qur'an acknowledges that other religions also have people among them who are pious. Allah has defined the *Saliheen* or the pious people in the Holy Qur'an:

> "They believe in Allah and the Last Day, and enjoin what is good and forbid evil, and hasten, vying with one another, in good works. And these are among the righteous".[6]

This is a very clear and simple definition. You can recognize them because they will tell you to do good and they will stop you from doing evil. The person who tells you to lie because you would not get caught is not pious but the person who advocates truthfulness in all situations is the pious one. You may find that your father and your grandfather are the "*Saliheen",* pious ones right in your own house and in your family. It is your duty to spend time with them, keep company with them and learn from them.

People in my generation were fortunate enough that we spent time with the companions of the Promised Messiah[as] who were certainly among the righteous. We would visit them consistently. Most of the time we had nothing to say but we watched them converse with others. We learned how God was part of their lives and every

topic they discussed, every problem they tackled, God was in the equation. Their way of talking affected us because they were among the rewarded people.

In our society today, the young people stay away from the older generation because they cannot relate to them or think that they are boring. So at dinner parties and social gatherings the young people hang around their own age group. So the blind lead the blind. They lose so much because of this and they have no idea how beneficial it can be for them to be in the company of the righteous. Promised Messiah[as] has shown so much emphasis on it. He has reminded us time after time to keep company with the righteous. I will just give here one quotation from *Malfoozat* (Collection of words of the Promised Messiah)).

> "Third aspect of salvation and righteousness is the company of the righteous people. This is a commandment of the Holy Qur'an "Be in the company of the righteous". It means that you should not be alone because that is when Satan attacks. Instead, be in the company of the righteous and be in their gatherings so the reflections of their light and blessings will shine on you and so that it will remove the dirt from every corner of your heart and replace it with the light of God."[7]

It is essential that we realize the necessity of making an effort to be among the pious people. Not just for us but for the protection of the next generation. It is not only important for the spiritual protection but for worldly well-being as well. Prophet David[as], thousands of years ago, stated, "I was a young man and now I am old but I have never seen a child of a *salih* or pious person to go hungry." His saying is recorded in Talmud.

In order to walk on the path of the rewarded people, we must seek Allah's help. It is not easy to disregard the materialistic powers

with their glamorous activities around us and to not be affected and impressed by them. Unless Allah's help and assistance comes, we cannot reject Satan and walk on the straight path. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah has made it clear that *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem* or the straight path is shown to the ones seeking Allah's help.

> "Thereby does Allah guide those who seek His pleasure on the paths of peace, and leads them out of every *kind of* darkness into light by His will, and guides them to the right path."[8]

It is in this course that Allah has taught us certain prayers through His mercy alone. Simple prayers such as *(Rabbanaa Aatinaa Fidduniyaa Hasanatun wa fil Akhiratay Hasanatun),* we pray for good in this world and the next. It is how we do good in this world with what we are granted in this world-- wealth and talents that can result in us getting rewards in the next world. As we make money in this world, we should spend it on helping our fellow human beings, the widows, the orphan and spend other ways for Allah's sake alone. This spending becomes the source of rewards in the next world. So the good in this world becomes the means of achieving the good in the next.

Following is a quote from the Promised Messiah[as] in which he has stated this very point in a manner full of light and wisdom and it applies to us today in the Western countries.

> "Beware! Having seen other nations, how they have attained a considerable measure of success in their worldly plans, you should not begin to wish to follow in their footsteps. Listen carefully and take heed that they are aliens to and unmindful of that God Who calls you all to Himself. What is their god but a frail human being, this being the reason why they have been left in such a complacent error. I do not wish to stop you from striving for worldly good, but you should not follow the ways

> of those who think this present world is all in all. In everything you do, whether it pertains to things in this world or the next, you should seek help and succor from God alone, and this should remain the guiding principle of your life forever and ever. But this seeking help should not be from your lips alone; it should be your conviction deep down to the bottom of your being that every blessing comes only from heaven.
>
> You shall be really righteous only when, at the time of every difficulty, before sitting down to make your plans, you close your door upon yourself, and fall down before the throne of God Almighty, crying for His grace and help and succor. Then the Holy Spirit will come to your help, and through unseen means a way shall be opened for you."[9]

I would state again that Allah has promised and demonstrated throughout history the protection of the children of His rewarded people. This is the best protection we can get for our next generation. We in America buy insurance for everything. Our houses, cars, business are all covered by insurance policies. Here is an insurance policy that we must get to protect our children by becoming righteous and following the straight path. This is the policy where the underwriter is God, the Holy Qur'an is the document, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is the witness and this policy has paid benefits for thousands of years.

May Allah grant us the opportunity of walking on *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem*, the straight path, so our souls and the souls of our children attain the perfect salvation.

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Imam of the Age

18: Accepting the Imam of the Age

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Allah's Plan of System of Successors:

Since the beginning of time when human beings started to live in groups and in social environment, discussions have taken place what is the best system for progress of human beings. Humanity's continuation as a race and establish opportunities for progress as species has been the main focus of these discussions. These discussions even take place in our current times. Is Capitalism better or Communism, or is Socialism the answer? Separation of Church and State is also part of the same discussions.

At the beginning of time, Allah also presented His system for the progress of human beings. He started the system of making successors on earth. He made Adam[as] His successor who is *Khalifatullah* or a Prophet and a Messenger. He was the Imam of his age. Allah's plan set up the system through which He will guide mankind for its progress through His appointed successors. He told the angels that He was the Creator and knows best and that He knows what they did not know. Allah gave the standing instructions to the angels that they would serve and help His successors fulfill their missions as dictated by Him.

Iblis or Lucifer at that time did not object to the system. He felt that he was the one who should be the leader. He stated that he was made of fire, full of energy and could make things happen. Adam[as] was made of clay and was soft, could be molded and was therefore inferior to him. Allah considered that arrogance and rejected *Iblis* and his thought process.

System for success of the human beings:

It is crucial to follow the plan of Allah because it is designed for the survival of the human beings. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah has reminded us of His benevolence not only for our physical life to

survive but for our spiritual survival as well.

Holy Qur'an says:

> "Who made the earth a place of rest, and placed rivers in the midst, and placed upon it firm mountains, and put a barrier between the two waters? Is there a God beside Allah? Nay, most of them know not. Or Who answers the cry of the distressed person when he calls upon Him and removes the evil and makes you **successors** in the earth? Is there a God beside Allah? Little it is that you reflect?"[1]

In these verses, Allah has stated how he made sure that we have water which is essential for our survival. Human beings, animals and vegetation on our planet cannot survive without water. Under a wonderful plan, He made sure that the rivers keep on flowing and provide us water. He also made sure through the use of mountains that sweet water of rivers did not get contaminated with the salt water of the oceans. He keeps them separate from each other.

Just as He has arranged for water for the physical life to continue, He also hears our prayers and appoints successors on the earth for our spiritual survival. Successors of Allah are essential for our spiritual survival and progress.

Allah also made sure that the flow of His guidance would flow like the rivers. Knowing that the successors are human beings and have limited life spans, He arranged for two things. One way was to make sure that as a new successor or Prophet appears all other prophet would help him.

In Holy Qur'an, it says:

> "And remember the time when Allah took a covenant from the Prophets saying, 'Whatever I give you of the Book and Wisdom and then there comes to you a Messenger, fulfilling

> that which is with you, you shall believe in him and help him.' And he said, 'Do you agree, and do you accept the responsibility which I lay upon you in this matter?' They said, 'We agree', He said, 'Then bear witness and I am with you among the witnesses.'"[2]

It is under this oath and covenant that the prophets agreed to help each new prophet that was appointed by Allah as the Imam of the age.

Prophecies of the prophets:

One way Prophets helped the new Messenger was that they prophesized about him so their nations and followers would recognize him and accept him. There were prophecies about Jesus' coming in Jewish scriptures (Torah and *Zaboor*). Jewish people have been waiting for the Messiah for the only reason that previous prophets prophesized about him. These Abrahamic prophets also prophesied about the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] in the Torah, *Zaboor* and the Gospels.

There are prophecies about Jesus' 2nd coming, Messiah for the latter days, in the Gospels and by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] in his *Ahadith* (traditions).

Matthew says: "For as lightening cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."[3]

We read in Thessalonians: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."[4]

In these two prophecies, followers of Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] were told by him that the Messiah will appear in the East and his message will spread to the West. However, his coming will be like a thief at night. If you are not awake and waiting and looking for the thief,

he can come and leave and you would miss him. Christians figured out from the prophecies of the Gospel the exact time of the coming of the Messiah but failed to recognize him. Jehovah's Witness organization is one example which had declared the correct time of the coming of the Messiah in the late 19th century. What they failed to understand was that when all the signs are there, it means that he has already appeared. You cannot see all the signs of his appearance and then still keep on waiting for him to show up.

For the Muslims we find that it says in *Hadith*, "Jesus will come as Imam among yourselves".[5] Holy Prophet also stated, "When the *Mahdi* appears you should give him my *Salaam* and accept him. Reach him even if you have to travel on your knees through snow."[6]

Once again, Muslims figured out the exact time of the coming of Messiah and *Mahdi* in the beginning of the fourteenth century *Hijri* calendar but failed to recognize him. There was only one claimant for the position but they would not even investigate and listen to him or read what he had to say.

This is one way that Allah made sure that the previous prophet foretold about the new messenger, successor or the Imam of the Age to keep the spiritual water flowing. This is one way that the previous prophets fulfilled their pledge that they took with Allah.

The second way Allah made sure of the continued flow of spiritual water was to establish successorship or *Khilafat* among the followers of the prophets. As long as the followers of the prophet believed and did good works, Allah gave them successors of the prophet who continued his work and kept the spiritual rivers flowing.

Benefits of accepting the Imam:

Prophets create a community of human beings who have

relationship with the Creator. They start to receive revelations, dreams and visions under the training of the Imam. Community becomes the beneficiary of the prayers of the Imam who has constant communication with the Creator. In our age, it was the Promised Messiah[as] who prepared a community of godly people who were helped by the Holy Ghost. Today, no *Jama'at* or group has that distinction other than Ahmadiyya Community established by the Imam of this age whose founder received direct guidance from Allah.

It was stated in the prophecies that the Imam of the latter days would be *Hakam* (Judge) to remove misunderstandings and *Biddats* (innovations) among the *Ummah*. Good example is the concept of *Jihad*,

Definition of Jihad for the new Age established by the Imam of the Age:

In the Holy Qur'an we read: "..whosoever killed a person, unless it be for killing a person or for creating disorder in the land, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind."[7]

We also read in *Surah Bani Israeel*, "And slay not the soul slaying of which Allah has forbidden except for a just cause."[8]

Under both of these verses, there are exceptions stated. A person can make an interpretation and say that the Christians and Jews are creating disorder in the land and therefore we have the right to kill them. Since the Holy Qur'an also says that killing can be for just cause, we believe we have the just cause to do it.

Question arises who is to determine what is justified and whether in this age killing of Christians and Jews is appropriate. It is the Imam of the Age who is to decide because his interpretations and guidance

is based on direct revelation from Allah. That is precisely why he is referred to as the *Hakam*. There is no other option. If we don't accept this option, whose interpretation are we to accept? Is the interpretation of *Wahabis, Salafis*, *Jama'at Islami, Hanafi, Brailvi* or *Dubandi* to be taken? If we take any one of these, all others will reject it. When it is based on the divine guidance, then everyone has to accept it. It is noteworthy that none of these sects have claimed that their interpretation is based on the divine revelation.

In this age, the Imam of the age, the Promised Messiah[as], has made the interpretation of *Jihad* based on the Divine guidance. No more *Jihad* of the sword but the *Jihad* of the pen. Now is the age of *Jihad* of arguments and discussions. Fighting the Christians and Jews with swords and guns is only allowed when they would attack us due to our religious beliefs and the Imam of the age would declare a *Jihad* against them.

Other reasons to accept the Imam of the age:

We must also accept and follow the Imam of this age because he is the model against which his nation will be judged by Allah on the day of resurrection. As Allah has stated that He will "bring the Prophets as witnesses against the people on the Day of Judgment."[9]

Under the guidance of Prophets, spiritual as well as secular achievements take place which are unprecedented. Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] changed the culture of Arabia and his followers became the spiritual leaders and teachers of the world in areas of science, math, music and astrology. These were people who were illiterate and considered to be useless before accepting the Imam of their age.

Question can be brought up that the big powers of today have achieved tremendous secular knowledge and power without

the guidance from a Prophet or an Imam. It must be noted that the progress of worldly nations (materialistic progress) such as achieved by the West comes at the cost of degradation of morality and spirituality which is not the case with an Imam's community. According to the census, 28% of American population is atheist. This percentage is much higher if you consider the population of age 40 and less. More than 50% divorce rate is just another indicator of degradation of morality as well as broken homes, teenage pregnancies and misguided children. Sexually transmitted diseases of all kind have spread among the population and the whole nation is fully aware of it in desperation. With all the might, education and know-how, society cannot find a solution.

On the other hand when you look at the scientists and political leaders such as Zafrullah Khan[ra] and Dr. Abdus Salam, followers of the Imam of the Age, we find that they kept standards of morality and spiritualty in balance with their worldly success. In the daytime Zafrullah Khan[ra] as the President of the U.N. General Assembly negotiated with the powers of the world. At night time, he went to sleep at 9PM so he could get up in the early hours of morning to say his *Tahajjud* prayers, praying to God that his decisions and his negotiations are blessed by God for the betterment of humanity. That is the training of the Imam of the Age.

Nizam-e-Silsila established by the Imam and his successors:

It is under the continuance of the mission of the Imam of the Age that the followers are at peace, teach peace and establish peace with perseverance under their leader who is known as the *Khalifa*.

It is noteworthy that Imam's community has not produced any terrorists in the world while in the Islamic world it has spread everywhere. Community of the Messiah is established in over 200

countries made up of people from all walks of life. Peoples of all ethnicities and races are members of this community. Yet not a single member is drawn to the misguided interpretations and harming the innocent human beings around them. In fact they are the helpers of the humanity.

Today's Muslims, whether *Sunni* or *Shia*, have no moral and spiritual leadership at city level, state level, country level or international level. This blessing is only under the Imam of the Age. We know who the leaders of Ahmadiyya community are at city level, country level and, of course, the *Khalifa* at the international level.

It is the training of Imam of this age that produced people who listen to the guidance and become an example for all nations.

Summary:

1. Acceptance of the Imam is necessary since it is under the system established by Allah from the beginning of our existence.

2. Acceptance of the Imam is necessary because other Prophets foretold about him, and his rejection would mean rejection of all previous Prophets.

3.To survive and be successful and become teachers of the world can only be done under the leadership of the Imam.

The Way, the Truth and the Life

2000 years ago, Jesus[as] son of Mary[as] said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."[10]

These words were spoken with such conviction, faith and confidence and are indeed true. Jesus[as] was the Imam of his age and there was no other way to get to Father except through him. In the time of

Prophet Noah[as], he was the way, the truth and life and no one could find salvation or get close to Father without going through him.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as], the Imam of this age has declared that Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is the way, the life and Spirit of Truth and no one can come to Father except through him. He declared that he has achieved closeness to God to such an extent that He speaks to him just about every day. Imam of this age wants everyone to hold his hand so he can take them through the way and the path to meet the Father.

Prophecies and prayers of the previous prophets are with the community of the Messiah because of the pledge they took with Allah. Prophecies and prayers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] are with the community of the Messiah. Prophecies and prayers of the Imam of this age are with this community. Today, it is this community which is the beacon of light for mankind, hope for the world.

The world has no choice but to join hands with this community to achieve everlasting peace in the world where in accordance with the prophecies about the latter days, the lamb and lion would drink from the same stream together. This community is destined to succeed. It is bound to happen.

It has been written and so it shall be done.

References

1. Holy Qur'an 27:62-64
2. Holy Qur'an 3:82
3. Mathews 24:27
4. Thessalonians 5:2
5. Bokhari Chapter 60, Hadith 119
6. Bokhari Chapter 36 Hadith 159
7. Holy Qur'an 5:32
8. Holy Qur'an 17:34
9. Holy Qur'an 16:90
10. John 14:6

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